اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا ۙ

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah Ale-Imran (The Family of Imran)

سُوْرَةُ اٰلِ عِمْرٰنَ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

(In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate)

الٓمّٓ ۝١

(3-1) Alif, Lam, Meem.

اللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۝٢

(3-2) Allah, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, Who sustains the entire order of the universe - there is no God but He. (1)

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَاَنْزَلَ التَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ ۙ

(3-3) He has revealed this Book to you, setting forth the truth and confirming the earlier Books, and earlier He revealed the Torah and Gospel

مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَاَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ۭ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ۝٤

(3-4) for the guidance of mankind; (2) and He has also revealed the Criterion (to distinguish truth from falsehood). A severe chastisement lies in store for those who deny the signs of Allah. Allah is All-Mighty; He is the Lord of Retribution.

(1) For explanation see (Surah 2, n. 278) above.

part of it. This has sometimes caused people to wonder if these books were indeed revealed by God. If they are accepted as revealed, one may wonder if the Qur'an really verifies their contents as this verse says. The fact is, however, that the Torah is not identical with the first five books of the Old Testament even though those books form a part of the Torah. Likewise, the Injil is not identical with the four Gospels of the New Testament.

The fact is that the Torah, in the Qur'anic usage, signifies the revelations made to Moses (peace be on him), in about forty years, from the time he was appointed a Prophet until his death. These include the Ten Commandments', which were handed over to him inscribed on stone tablets. Moses took down the rest of the revealed injunctions and handed over one copy to each of the twelve tribes of Israel, and one copy to the Levites for safe keeping. It is this book which was known as the Torah and it existed until the first destruction of Jerusalem. The copy entrusted to the Levites was put beside the Ark of the Covenant along with the Commandment tablets, and the Israelites knew it as the Torah. The Jews, however, neglected the Book: during the reign of Josiah the King of Judah the Temple of Solomon was under repair and the high priest, Hilkiah, chanced to find the Book lying in the construction area. He gave it to the King's secretary, Shaphan, who in turn took it to the King as if it were a strange find (see 2 Kings 22: 8-13).

Hence, when the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Jerusalem and razed it and the Temple of Solomon to the ground, the Israelites lost forever the few original copies of the Torah which they possessed, and which they had consigned to obscurity. At the time of Ezra the priest, some Israelites returned from captivity in Babylon, and when Jerusalem was rebuilt the entire history of Israel, which now comprises the first seventeen books of the Old Testament, was recorded by Ezra with the assistance of some other elders of the community. Four of these books, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, consist of a biographical narrative of Moses. In this biography those verses of the Torah available to Ezra and the other elders are also recorded and in the contexts in which they were revealed. The present Torah, therefore, comprises those fragments of the original book

which are interspersed throughout the biography of Moses (composed in the manner described above).

In locating these fragments of the original Torah there are certain expressions which help us. These are interspersed between the different pieces of biographical narration and usually open with words such as: 'Then the Lord said to Moses', and 'Moses said, the Lord your God commands you.' These expressions, then, are fragments of the original Torah. When the biographical narration re-commences, however, we can be sure that the fragment of the true Torah has concluded. Wherever authors and editors of the Bible have added anything of their own accord, by way of either elaboration or elucidation, it has become very difficult for an ordinary reader to distinguish the original from the explanatory additions. Those with insight into Divine Scripture, however, do have the capacity to distinguish between the original revealed fragments and the later, human interpolations.

It is these scattered fragments of the original revealed Book which the Qur'an terms as the Torah, and it is these which it confirms. When these fragments are compared with the Qur'an, there is no difference between the two as regards the fundamental teachings. Whatever differences exist relate to legal matters and are of secondary importance. Even today a careful reader can appreciate that the Torah and the Qur'an have sprung from one and the same Divine source.

Likewise, Injil signifies the inspired orations and utterances of Jesus (peace be on him), which he delivered during the last two or three years of his life in his capacity as a Prophet. There are no certain means by which we can definitively establish whether or not his statements were recorded during his lifetime. It is possible that some people took notes of them and that some followers committed them to memory. After a period of time, however, several treatises on the life of Jesus were written. The authors of these treatises recorded, in connection with the biographical account, those sayings of his which they had received from the previous generation of co-religionists, in the form of either oral

traditions or written notes about events in his life. As a result the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are not identical with the Injil. Rather, the Injil consists of those statements by Jesus which form part of these Gospels. Unfortunately we have no means of distinguishing the fragments of the original Injil from the pieces written by the authors themselves. All we can say is that only those sections explicitly attributed to Jesus, for example in statements such as: 'And Jesus said' and 'And Jesus taught', constitute the true Injil. It is the totality of such fragments which is designated as the Injil by the Qur'an, and it is the teachings contained in these fragments that the Qur'an confirms. If these fragments are put together and compared with the teachings of the Qur'an one notices very few discrepancies between the two, and any discrepancies that are found can be resolved easily by unbiased reflection.

اِنَّ اللّٰہَ لَا یَخۡفٰی عَلَیۡہِ شَیۡءٌ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ وَ لَا فِی السَّمَآءِ ﴿۵﴾

(3-5) Nothing in the earth and in the heavens is hidden from Allah. (3)

(3) That is, God knows all the facts of the universe. Hence the Book which He has revealed is, of necessity, true. It may be more appropriate to say that the unadulterated Truth can be made available to man only through this Book, which has been revealed by the All-Knowing, All-Wise God.

ہُوَ الَّذِیۡ یُصَوِّرُکُمۡ فِی الۡاَرۡحَامِ کَیۡفَ یَشَآءُ ؕ لَاۤ اِلٰہَ اِلَّا ہُوَ الۡعَزِیۡزُ الۡحَکِیۡمُ ﴿۶﴾

(3-6) It is He Who fashions you in the wombs as He wills. (4) There is no God but He; the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

(4) This refers to two important facts. The first is that no being knows human nature as well as God does; it is thus imperative that man should depend on the guidance revealed by God, something man needs the most. The second is that the Being Who takes care of all of man's requirements, major and minor,

from the time of conception onwards, will not fail to provide guidance for man's conduct in this life.

هُوَ الَّذِیۡۤ اَنۡزَلَ عَلَیۡکَ الۡکِتٰبَ مِنۡهُ اٰیٰتٌ مُّحۡکَمٰتٌ هُنَّ اُمُّ الۡکِتٰبِ وَ اُخَرُ مُتَشٰبِهٰتٌ ؕ فَاَمَّا الَّذِیۡنَ فِیۡ قُلُوۡبِهِمۡ زَیۡغٌ فَیَتَّبِعُوۡنَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنۡهُ ابۡتِغَآءَ الۡفِتۡنَةِ وَ ابۡتِغَآءَ تَاۡوِیۡلِهٖ ۚ وَ مَا یَعۡلَمُ تَاۡوِیۡلَهٗۤ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۘ وَ الرّٰسِخُوۡنَ فِی الۡعِلۡمِ یَقُوۡلُوۡنَ اٰمَنَّا بِهٖ ۙ کُلٌّ مِّنۡ عِنۡدِ رَبِّنَا ۚ وَ مَا یَذَّکَّرُ اِلَّاۤ اُولُوا الۡاَلۡبَابِ ۷

(3-7) It is He Who has revealed the Book to you. Some of its verses are absolutely clear and lucid, and these are the core of the Book.(5) Others are ambiguous.(6) Those in whose hearts there is perversity, always go about the part which is ambiguous, seeking mischief and seeking to arrive at its meaning arbitrarily, although none knows their true meaning except Allah. On the contrary, those firmly rooted in knowledge say: 'We believe in it; it is all from our Lord alone. (7) No one derives true admonition from anything except the men of understanding.

(5) Muhkam means that which has been made firmly and perfectly. The muhkam verses mentioned here are those Qur'anic verses which are embodied in clear and lucid language and whose meaning is not liable to any ambiguity and equivocation. The words of these verses are clear pointers to their true meaning and, therefore, it is difficult to subject them to arbitrary interpretation. Such verses form the core of the Holy Book; they are the verses which fulfil the true purpose for which the Qur'an was revealed, and they invite the whole world to Islam. They embody admonition and instruction as well as the refutation of erroneous doctrines and the elucidation of the Right Way. They also contain the fundamentals of the true faith; teachings relating to belief, worship and morality, and mandatory duties and prohibitions. These are the verses which will guide the genuine seeker after Truth who turns to the Qur'an in order to find out what he ought and ought not to do.

(6) 'Ambiguous' verses are those whose meaning may have some degree of equivocation. It is obvious that no way of life can

be prescribed for man unless a certain amount of knowledge explaining the truth about the universe, about its origin and end, about man's position in it and other matters of similar importance, is intimated to him. It is also evident that the truths which lie beyond the range of human perception have always eluded and will continue to elude man; no words exist in the human vocabulary which either express or portray them. In speaking about such things, we necessarily resort to words and expressions generally employed in connection with tangible objects. In the Qur'an, too, this kind of language is employed in relation to supernatural matters; the verses which have been characterized as 'ambiguous' refer to such matters.

At best, such expressions may serve to either bring man close to or enable him to formulate some view of reality, even if it is a faint one. The more one tries to determine the precise meaning of such verses, the more their ambiguities proliferate, and the more one is confronted with choosing between several plausible interpretations. All this is likely to alienate one progressively further away' from the Truth instead of bringing one closer to it. Those who seek the Truth and do not hanker after the satisfaction of their egocentric quest for exotic superfluities, will be satisfied with the dim vision of reality derived from these verses. They will concentrate their attention instead on the clear and lucid 'core' verses of the Qur'an. It will be left to those who are either out to make mischief and mislead people or who have an abnormal passion for superfluities to devote their attention to hair-splitting discussions about the contents of the 'ambiguous" verses.

(7) This might give rise to an unnecessary problem: How can people believe in 'ambiguous' verses when the contents of these cannot be grasped?

The fact is that a reasonable person will believe that the Qur'an is the Book of God through his reading of its clear and lucid verses, rather than by learning fanciful interpretations of the ambiguous verses. Once so convinced, he is not likely to be worried by doubts and anxieties caused by the ambiguities of the verses concerned. One who seeks the Truth is satisfied with the

obvious meaning of these verses, and wherever he encounters complications and ambiguities he abstains from pursuing their solution too far. Instead of wasting his time splitting hairs, he is content to believe in the things laid down in the Book of God, without seeking to know them precisely and in detail. He turns his attention, in the main, to questions of a practical nature.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغ قُلُوبَنَا بَعۡدَ اِذ هَدَيۡتَنَا وَهَب لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ رَحۡمَةً اِنَّكَ اَنتَ الۡوَهَّابُ ﴿٨﴾

(3-8) They pray to Allah: 'Our Lord! Do not let our hearts swerve towards crookedness after You have guided us to the right way, and. bestow upon us Your mercy. Surely You, only You, are the Munificent Giver!

رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوۡمٍ لَّا رَيۡبَ فِيۡهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُخۡلِفُ الۡمِيۡعَادَ ﴿٩﴾

(3-9) Our Lord! You surely will gather mankind together one Day, a Day about (the coming of which) there is no doubt. Surely Allah never goes against His promise.'

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا لَنۡ تُغۡنِىَ عَنۡهُمۡ اَمۡوَالُهُمۡ وَلَاۤ اَوۡلَادُهُمۡ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيۡـًٔا ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمۡ وَقُوۡدُ النَّارِ ﴿١٠﴾

(3-10) Those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their offspring will avail them at all against Allah, and it is they who will be the fuel of the Fire

كَدَاۡبِ اٰلِ فِرۡعَوۡنَ ۙ وَالَّذِيۡنَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِهِمۡ ؕ كَذَّبُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِنَا فَاَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوۡبِهِمۡ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيۡدُ الۡعِقَابِ ﴿١١﴾

(3-11) (To them shall happen) the like of what happened to the people of Pharaoh, and those before them. They rejected Our signs, so Allah seized them for their sins. Allah indeed is severe in punishment.

قُلۡ لِّلَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا سَتُغۡلَبُوۡنَ وَتُحۡشَرُوۡنَ اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ ؕ وَبِئۡسَ الۡمِهَادُ ﴿١٢﴾

(3-12) Tell those who disbelieved: [8] 'You shall soon be overpowered and mustered to Hell - and that is an evil resting place!'

(8) For explanation see (Surah 2, n. 161)above.

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ اٰيَةٌ فِيْ فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا ؕ فِئَةٌ تُقَاتِلُ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَاُخْرٰى كَافِرَةٌ يَّرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَاْىَ الْعَيْنِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّاُولِى الْاَبْصَارِ ۱۳

(3-13) You have already come across an instructive sign in the two hosts that encountered each other in battle (at Badr): one host fighting in the way of Allah, and the other that of unbelievers. They saw with their own eyes that one host was twice the number of the other. [9] But (the result of the battle has proved that) Allah succors with His victory whomsoever He wills. In this there is surely a lesson for all who have eyes to see. [10]

(9) The actual disparity between the two armies was roughly three to one, but even a cursory glance was enough to tell the casual observer that the army of unbelievers was about twice as large as that of the believers.

(10) The events and results of the Battle of Badr are briefly reviewed so as to bring home certain lessons to the Muslims. There are three important lessons to be learnt. First, the manner in which the believers and the unbelievers advanced to the battlefield clearly demonstrated the difference in the moral fibre of the two armies. In the army of the unbelievers, the soldiers held drinking parties and were entertained by the songs and dances of slave girls. The prevalent mood of that army was one of self-indulgence. On the other hand, piety, fear of God and moral restraint of the highest order characterized the Muslim army. The soldiers were busy in devotion and remembrance of God, to Whom they addressed all their prayers and supplication. It was obvious to anyone which army was fighting in God's cause. Second, the believers won a resounding victory against an army

of unbelievers superior to them in numbers, and in the quality and the quantity of arms. So the victory clearly indicated which of the two armies enjoyed the support of God. Third, the outcome of the battle came as a shocking humiliation for those who, heedless of God's might, had been exulting in the strength of their arms and the number of their supporters. It came as a shock to such people when God subjected a tribe like the Quraysh, foremost in influence and power throughout Arabia, to an ignominious defeat at the hands of a few ill-equipped Makkan fugitives and peasants from Madinah.

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوٰتِ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ وَ الْبَنِيْنَ وَ الْقَنَاطِيْرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَ الْفِضَّةِ وَ الْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَ الْاَنْعَامِ وَ الْحَرْثِ ذٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَ اللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗ حُسْنُ الْمَاٰبِ ﴿١٤﴾

(3-14) Men are naturally tempted by the lure of women, children, treasures of gold and silver, horses of mark, cattle and plantations. These are the enjoyments in the life of this world; but with Allah lies a goodly abode to return to.

قُلْ اَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَ اَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّ رِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ اللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾

(3-15) Say: 'Shall I tell you of things better than these? For the God-fearing there are, with their Lord, gardens beneath which rivers flow; there they will abide forever, will have spouses of stainless purity (11) as companions, and will enjoy the good pleasure of Allah.' Allah thoroughly observes His servants.(12)

(11) For explanation see (Surah 2, n. 27) above.

(12) This shows that God neither showers His favors on people arbitrarily nor makes casual and superficial judgements. He knows full well the deeds and intentions of people. He also knows who merits His rewards and who does not.

اَلَّذِ یۡنَ یَقُ ۡلُ ۡونَ رَبَّنَ ۤا اِنَّنَ ۤا اٰمَنَّا فَا غۡ فِ ۡرلَنَا ذُنُ ۡوبَنَا وَ قِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۚ ۱۶

(3-16) These are the ones who pray: 'Our Lord! We do indeed believe, so forgive us our sins and keep us safe from the chastisement of the Fire';

اَلصّٰبِرِ یۡنَ وَ الصّٰدِقِ ۡنَ وَ الۡقٰنِتِ ۡنَ وَ الۡمُ ۡنفِقِ ۡنَ وَ الۡمُسۡتَغۡفِ ۡرِ ۡنَ بِالۡاَسۡحَارِ ۱۷

(3-17) men who are steadfast, (13) truthful, obedient, spend (in the way of Allah) and implore the forgiveness of Allah before daybreak.

(13) That is, they are those who remain steadfast in the cause of Truth; who do not lose heart when they either suffer losses or are subjected to afflictions; who do not despair when they encounter reverses; who are not seduced by temptations. They are the ones who remain faithful to the Truth, even when it apparently stands no chance of prevailing see also (Surah 2, n. 60 above.)

شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّهٗ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ وَ الۡمَلٰٓئِکَۃُ وَ اُولُوا الۡعِلۡمِ قَآئِمًۢا بِالۡقِسۡطِ ؕ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الۡعَزِیۡزُ الۡحَکِیۡمُ ؕ ۱۸

(3-18) Allah Himself bears witness that there is no God but He;(14) and likewise do the angels and the men possessed of knowledge (15) bear witness in truth and justice that there is no God but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

(14) The testimony in question is from God Himself, Who knows directly all the realities of the universe, Who observes every existing thing without obstruction. It is the testimony of the One from Whose sight nothing is hidden, and who can be a better first-hand witness than He? His testimony is that no one but He is possessed of the attributes of godhead; no one has the power to govern the universe, and no one has the right to claim the rights which belong exclusively to God.

(15) After God, the most trustworthy testimony is that of the angels, for they carry out the administration of the universe. The testimony of the angels, based on their own observations, is that the Will of God alone reigns supreme in the universe, and they turn to Him alone in the governance of the heavens and the earth. Moreover, all creatures possessing knowledge of reality have testified, unanimously, that no one except the One True God reigns and rules over the universe.

اِنَّ الدِّ ۡرَءِ ۡندَاللّٰا ۡلِسۡلَامُ وَ مَا ا ۡخۡتَلَفَ الَّذِ ۡرَاُ ۡوُوا ا ۡل ۡكِتٰبَ اِلَّامِ ۡبَ ۡعدِمَا جَآءَهُمُ ا ۡلِ ۡلُ
بَ ۡغۡيَۢا ۡبَ ۡنَهُ ؕ وَ مَ ۡيَّ ۡرۡفُ ۡبِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِ ۡعُ ا ۡحِسَابِ ۱۹

(3-19) The true religion with Allah is Islam. (16) The People of the Book adopted many different ways rather than follow the true way of Islam even after the knowledge of truth had reached them, and this merely to commit excesses against one another. (17) Let him who refuses to follow the ordinances and directives of Allah know that Allah is swift in His reckoning.

(16) In the sight of God there is only one system of life and way of conduct which is both in accord with reality and morally right. This consists of man's acknowledging God as his Lord and the sole object of his worship and devotion; of surrendering himself unreservedly to God in obedience and service. In doing so he should follow in toto the guidance communicated by God through His Messengers rather than try to devise ways of serving God according to his own lights. This mode of thought and action is known as Islam, and it is only reasonable that the Lord and Creator of the universe should accept nothing less from His creatures and servants. In his folly man thinks that he has the right to believe in and follow every doctrine that comes his way whether it be atheism or idolatry. In the sight of the Sovereign of the universe, however, all such attitudes amount to nothing short of rebellion against God.

(17) This shows that the religion of every Messenger of God, in every age and clime, was none other than Islam (submission to God). Likewise, every Divine book, in whichever language it was

revealed, and to whichever people it was addressed, contained the teachings of Islam. The various religions which have spread among mankind are distortions of this true, original religion, and are the result of tampering. Coveting privileges over and above those to which they were entitled, people altered the beliefs, principles and injunctions of the true religion in a manner conducive to their own interests.

فَاِنۡ حَآجُّوۡكَ فَقُلۡ اَسۡلَمۡتُ وَجۡهِىَ لِلّٰهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ؕ وَقُلۡ لِّلَّذِيۡنَ اُوۡتُوا الۡكِتٰبَ وَالۡاُمِّيّٖنَ ءَاَسۡلَمۡتُمۡ ؕ فَاِنۡ اَسۡلَمُوۡا فَقَدِ اهۡتَدَوۡا ۚ وَاِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَاِنَّمَا عَلَيۡكَ الۡبَلٰغُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيۡرٌۢ بِالۡعِبَادِ ﴿۲۰﴾

(3-20) And if they remonstrate with you, tell them: 'I have submitted my whole being to Allah, and so have those who follow me.' And ask the People of the Book as well as those who follow no heavenly Scripture: 'Have you also submitted (to Allah)?' (18) If they have submitted to Him, they are indeed on the right way but if they deviate from submitting to Allah, then your duty is merely to deliver the message. Allah observes the affairs of His servants.

(18) The Prophet (peace be on him) is asked to tell them in effect: I and my followers have embraced the original, unadulterated Islam which is the true religion enjoined by God. Tell us, now, if you are prepared to give up the accretions introduced by your forefathers, and embrace this original, true religion?'

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ يَكۡفُرُوۡنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقۡتُلُوۡنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ بِغَيۡرِ حَقٍّ ۙ وَّيَقۡتُلُوۡنَ الَّذِيۡنَ يَاۡمُرُوۡنَ بِالۡقِسۡطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ ۙ فَبَشِّرۡهُمۡ بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيۡمٍ ﴿۲۱﴾

(3-21) Give those who refuse to follow the directives of Allah, who slay the Prophets unjustly, and who slay those who enjoin justice, give them glad tidings of a grievous chastisement. (19)

(19) This is a sarcastic remark. Its purpose is to bring home to them that the misdeeds about which they are so jubilant, and which they regard as their proud achievements, will ultimately lead them to a painful end.

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

(3-22) These are the people whose works have gone to waste in this world and in the World to Come.(20) They have none to help them. (21)

(20) They have spent their efforts and energies in a manner leading to catastrophic results in this world and the Next.

(21) No power can make these misdeeds either bear good fruit or prevent them bearing evil fruit. The powers upon which the wrong-doers rely for support in this world and in the World to Come will not be of any help to them.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلٰى كِتٰبِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلّٰى فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

(3-23) Have you not noticed those who have been given a portion of the Book? Whenever their learned men are summoned to the Book of Allah to judge the differences between them, (22) a party of them turns away in aversion.

(22) They are asked to acknowledge the Book of God as the final arbiter in all matters, and to submit to its judgement, accepting as right whatever this Book holds to be right, and as wrong whatever it holds to be wrong. The Book of God referred to here is the Torah and the Injil, while the expression 'those who have been given a portion of the Book' refers to the Jewish and

Christian religious scholars. (For the Quranic view of the Torah and the Injil see n. 2 above - Ed.)

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُم قَالُوا لَن تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ اِلَّآ اَيَّامًا مَّعۡدُوۡدٰتٍ وَ غَرَّهُمۡ فِىۡ دِيۡنِهِم مَّا كَانُوۡا يَفۡتَرُوۡنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

(3-24) This is because they say: 'The fire of Hell shall not touch us except for a limited number of days. (23) The false beliefs which they have forged have deluded them in their faith.

(23) These people considered themselves to be God's favorites and cherished the illusion that, regardless of what they did, they were bound to enter Paradise. They took the view that since they were believers, were descended from pious people, followed noble Prophets, and were disciples and admirers of holy men, Hell would not dare touch them. They also thought that even if they were thrown into Hell they would remain there for a few days only, to be purged of the impurity of the sins which had afflicted them, and would then be sent straight to Paradise. Such notions had made them so bold that even when they committed the most atrocious crimes and the most mortal of sins, and brazenly deviated from Truth and rectitude, their hearts remained utterly unmoved by the fear of God.

فَكَيۡفَ اِذَا جَمَعۡنٰهُمۡ لِيَوۡمٍ لَّا رَيۡبَ فِيۡهِ ۪ وَ وُفِّيَتۡ كُلُّ نَفۡسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتۡ وَهُمۡ لَا يُظۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۲۵﴾

(3-25) How, then, will they fare when We shall gather them all together to witness the Day about (the coming of) which there is no doubt, and when every human being shall be repaid in full for what he has done, and none shall be wronged?

قُلِ اللّٰهُمَّ مٰلِكَ الۡمُلۡكِ تُؤۡتِى الۡمُلۡكَ مَنۡ تَشَآءُ وَ تَنۡزِعُ الۡمُلۡكَ مِمَّنۡ تَشَآءُ وَ تُعِزُّ مَنۡ تَشَآءُ وَ تُذِلُّ مَنۡ تَشَآءُ ؕ بِيَدِكَ الۡخَيۡرُ ؕ اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ﴿۲۶﴾

(3-26) Say: 'O Allah, Lord of all dominion! You give dominion to whom You will, and take away dominion from whom

You will, and You exalt whom You will, and abase whom You will. In Your Hand is all good. Surely You are All-Powerful.

تُولِجُ الَّيۡلَ فِى النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِى الَّيۡلِ ۖ وَتُخۡرِجُ الۡحَىَّ مِنَ الۡمَيِّتِ وَتُخۡرِجُ الۡمَيِّتَ مِنَ الۡحَىِّ ۖ وَتَرۡزُقُ مَنۡ تَشَآءُ بِغَيۡرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

(3-27) You cause the night to pass into the day and the day to pass into the night. You bring forth the living out of the dead, and You bring the dead out of the living, and You give sustenance to whom You will beyond all reckoning. (24)

(24) Those who disbelieved and disobeyed were seen to be prosperous, whereas the believers, with their devotion and loyalty to God, suffered all the deprivation, persecution and torment to which the Prophet and his followers were subjected around the year 3 A.H. The contrasting states of the two groups of men were the reverse of what would naturally be expected. This raised disturbing questions in people's minds about the underlying wisdom of this phenomenon. The verse conveys God's answer.

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الۡمُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ اَوۡلِيَآءَ مِنۡ دُوۡنِ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ۚ وَمَنۡ يَّفۡعَلۡ ذٰلِكَ فَلَيۡسَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فِىۡ شَىۡءٍ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡ تَتَّقُوۡا مِنۡهُمۡ تُقٰٮةً ؕ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفۡسَهٗ ؕ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ الۡمَصِيۡرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

(3-28) The believers may not take the unbelievers for their allies in preference to those who believe. Whoever does this has nothing to do with Allah unless he does so in order to protect himself from their wrong-doing.(25) Allah warns you to beware of Him for it is to Allah that you will return. (26)

(25) This means that it is lawful for a believer, helpless in the grip of the enemies of Islam and in imminent danger of severe wrong and persecution, to keep his faith concealed and to behave in such a manner as to create the impression that he is on the same side as his enemies. A person whose Muslim identity is discovered is permitted to adopt a friendly attitude onwards the unbelievers in order to save his life. If he considers himself

incapable of enduring the excesses to which he may be subjected, he may even state that he is not a believer.

(26) One should not be overwhelmed by the fear of other human beings to the extent of losing the fear of God. Human beings can harm a man but the most they can do is to ruin his transient, earthly life. God, on the other hand, can subject him to everlasting torment. If one is constrained in extraordinary circumstances to resort to a prudent concealment of faith (taqiyah) in order to save one's life, this concealment should remain within reasonable limits. The most one is permitted to do is to protect one's life and property without jeopardizing either the interests of Islam or of the Muslim community as a whole, and without causing loss of life and property to other Muslims. One must never allow saving one's own life to lead to the propagation of unbelief at the expense of Islam and to the dominance of unbelievers over Muslims. Here the believers are warned that, no matter how dangerous the circumstances surrounding them, they cannot escape God's reproach if they give substantial aid to those rebelling against Him, and cause any harm to God's chosen religion, to the community of believers or to any individual believer. For, it is to God that one will ultimately return for reckoning.

قُلۡ اِنۡ تُخۡفُوۡا مَا فِیۡ صُدُوۡرِکُمۡ اَوۡ تُبۡدُوۡہُ یَعۡلَمۡہُ اللّٰہُ ؕ وَ یَعۡلَمُ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِی الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ عَلٰی کُلِّ شَیۡءٍ قَدِیۡرٌ ﴿۲۹﴾

(3-29) Say: 'Whether you conceal what is in your hearts or disclose it, Allah knows it. Allah knows what is in the heavens and in the earth and He has power over everything.

یَوۡمَ تَجِدُ کُلُّ نَفۡسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتۡ مِنۡ خَیۡرٍ مُّحۡضَرًا ۚ وَّ مَا عَمِلَتۡ مِنۡ سُوۡٓءٍ ۚ تَوَدُّ لَوۡ اَنَّ بَیۡنَہَا وَ بَیۡنَہٗۤ اَمَدًۢا بَعِیۡدًا ؕ وَ یُحَذِّرُکُمُ اللّٰہُ نَفۡسَہٗ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ رَءُوۡفٌۢ بِالۡعِبَادِ ﴿۳۰﴾

(3-30) The Day is approaching when every soul shall find itself confronted with whatever good it has done and whatever evil it has wrought. It will then wish there is a wide space between

it and the Day! Allah warns you to beware of Him; He is most tender towards His servants. (27)

(27) It is out of sheer goodwill that God warns people against deeds likely to have devastating consequences for them.

قُلۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ تُحِبُّوۡنَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُوۡنِىۡ يُحۡبِبۡكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوۡبَكُمۡ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِيۡمٌ ﴿۳۱﴾

(3-31) (O Messenger!) Tell people: 'If you indeed love Allah, follow me, and Allah will love you and will forgive you your sins. Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate.'

قُلۡ اَطِيۡعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوۡلَ ۚ فَاِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ ﴿۳۲﴾

(3-32) Say: 'Obey Allah and obey the Messenger.' If they turn away from this then know that Allah does not love those who refuse to obey Him and His Messenger. (28)

(28) This marks the conclusion of the first discourse. Reflection upon its contents, particularly the reference to the Battle of Badr, leads one to the conclusion that this section was probably revealed between the battles of Badr and Uhud, i.e. sometime in 3 A.H. The tradition mentioned by Muhammad b. Ishaq has led to the common misunderstanding that the first eighty verses of this surah were revealed on the occasion of the arrival of the deputation from Najran in 9 A.H. (See Ibn Hisham. Sirah, vol. 1, pp. 573 ff., especially p. 576; Ibn Ishaq, Life of Muhammad, tr. A. Guillaume, second impression, London, Oxford, 1968. pp. 270 ff.. especially p. 272 - Ed.) This is not true. In the first place, the introductory section indicates that the surah was revealed much earlier. Second, the Tradition narrated by Muqatil b. Sulayman states explicitly that on the occasion of the arrival of the deputation from Najran only those verses which concern the Prophets John (Yahya) and Jesus ('Isa) (peace be on them) were revealed, and the number of those verses is about thirty.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصۡطَفٰۤی اٰدَمَ وَ نُوۡحًا وَّ اٰلَ اِبۡرٰهِیۡمَ وَ اٰلَ عِمۡرٰنَ عَلَی الۡعٰلَمِیۡنَ ۙ﴿۳۳﴾

(3-33) Truly Allah [29] chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and of 'Imran [30] above all mankind.

(29) This marks the beginning of the second discourse. The period of its revelation is about 9 A.H., when a delegation from the Christian republic of Najran visited the Prophet. Najran lies between the Hijaz and Yaman, and comprised, at that time, seventy-three towns and villages. Its population can be gauged from the fact that an estimated one hundred and twenty thousand men could bear arms. The entire population was Christian and was under the hegemony of three Christian chiefs. The first of these, 'aqib, was the head of the community. The second, sayyid, looked after the collective and political affairs of the people. The third, usquf (bishop), was their religious leader. (See Ibn Hisham, vol. 1, p. 573; Ibn Ishaq, Life of Muhammad, tr. A. Guillaume, pp. 270 f. - Ed.)

When the Prophet annexed Makka, the whole of Arabia became convinced that the future of the area was bound up with him, and deputations from all parts of the peninsula began to visit him. In this connection the three chiefs of Najran came to Madinah accompanied by sixty people. As they were not prepared to go to war, the alternatives before them were either to embrace Islam or to live as dhimmis (protected non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state). It was on this occasion that God revealed this discourse; it served as an invitation to the people of Najran to accept Islam.

(30) 'Imran was the father of Moses and Aaron, and has been mentioned in the Bible as Amram.

ذُرِّیَّۃًۢ بَعۡضُہَا مِنۡۢ بَعۡضٍ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ سَمِیۡعٌ عَلِیۡمٌ ﴿۳۴﴾

(3-34) (for His messenger ship) - a people alike and the seed of one another. (31) Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(31) The real error of the Christians lies in considering Jesus to be the son of God and a partner in His godhead, rather than His servant and Messenger. If this misunderstanding was removed it would become quite easy for them to advance towards Islam. Hence at the very outset of the discourse it is mentioned that Adam, Noah and the Prophets in the house of Abraham and 'Imran were all human beings. Even though many Prophets were born in the same family, one from the other, none of them was God. Their merit lay in the fact that God had chosen them to preach His religion and reform the world.

اِذ قَالَتِ ا مرَاَتُ عِ مرٰنَ رَبِّ اِنِّی نَذَ رتُ لَکَ مَا فِی بَطنِی مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّل مِنِّی اِنَّکَ اَ نتَ السَّمِیعُ ال عَلِیمُ ٣٥

(3-35) (He also heard) when the woman of 'Imran (32) said: 'O Lord! Behold, unto You do I vow that the child in my womb is to be devoted to Your exclusive service. Accept it, then, from me. Surely You alone are All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (33)

(32) If the 'woman of 'Imran' is interpreted as the wife of 'Imran, this 'Imran must be different from the 'Imran just mentioned (see the preceding verse). In the Christian tradition the name of the father of Mary is mentioned as Joachim. If this expression, however, is interpreted to mean 'a woman of the house of 'Imran', it would mean that the mother of Mary belonged to that tribe. There is, unfortunately, no definite source of information that would lead us to prefer one interpretation to the other, as there is no historical record either about who the parents of Mary were, or to which tribes they belonged. Were we to accept the tradition that the mother of John (Yahya) and the mother of Jesus were cousins, then it would be valid to interpret the expression as meaning 'a woman of the tribe of 'Imran' for, according to the Gospel of Luke, the mother of John was one of the daughters of Aaron (Luke 1:5).

(33) That is, God heeds the prayers of His creatures and is well aware of their intentions.

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتۡ ہَا قَالَتۡ رَبِّ اِنِّیۡ وَضَعۡتُہَاۤ اُنۡثٰی ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ اَعۡلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتۡ ؕ وَ لَیۡسَ الذَّکَرُ
کَالۡاُنۡثٰی ۚ وَ اِنِّیۡ سَمَّیۡتُہَا مَرۡیَمَ وَ اِنِّیۡۤ اُعِیۡذُہَا بِکَ وَ ذُرِّیَّتَہَا مِنَ الشَّیۡطٰنِ الرَّجِیۡمِ ﴿۳۶﴾

(3-36) But when she gave birth to a female child, she said: 'O Lord! I have given birth to a female' - and Allah knew full well what she had given birth to - 'and a female is not the same as a male.(34) I have named her Mary and commit her and her offspring to You for protection from Satan, the accursed.'

(34) Since a boy is free from some of the physical shortcomings and social disabilities associated with a girl, the mother of Mary thought that had the child been a boy he would have been more able to achieve the purpose for which she had consecrated the child.

فَتَقَبَّلَہَا رَبُّہَا بِقَبُوۡلٍ حَسَنٍ وَّ اَنۡۢبَتَہَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَّ کَفَّلَہَا زَکَرِیَّا ؕ کُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَیۡہَا زَکَرِیَّا
الۡمِحۡرَابَ ۙ وَجَدَ عِنۡدَہَا رِزۡقًا ۚ قَالَ یٰمَرۡیَمُ اَنّٰی لَکِ ہٰذَا ؕ قَالَتۡ ہُوَ مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰہِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ یَرۡزُقُ
مَنۡ یَّشَآءُ بِغَیۡرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿۳۷﴾

(3-37) Thereupon her Lord graciously accepted Mary and vouchsafed to her a goodly growth and placed her in the care of Zechariah. Whenever Zechariah (35) visited her in the sanctuary, (36) he found her provided with food. He asked her: 'O Mary, how did this come to you?' She said: 'It is from Allah. Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills beyond all reckoning.'

(35) This section refers to that period of Mary's life when she attained her majority and was admitted to the Temple of Jerusalem, and devoted all her time to remembering God. Zechariah, into whose care she was given, was perhaps the husband of her maternal aunt, and was one of the guardians of the Temple. This Zechariah is not to be confused with the Prophet Zechariah whose assassination is mentioned in the Old Testament.

(36) The word mihrab usually refers to that niche in mosques where the leader of the prayer stands. In this instance, however, the term signifies the apartments usually built in synagogues and sanctuaries on a raised platform adjacent to the place of congregational worship, which served as the residence of caretakers, servants and beggars. Mary lived in an apartment of this kind and devoted all her time to worship and prayer.

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهٗ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِیْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ ذُرِّیَّةً طَیِّبَةً اِنَّكَ سَمِیْعُ الدُّعَآءِ ﴿۳۸﴾

(3-38) Then Zechariah prayed to his Lord: 'O Lord! Grant me from Yourself out of Your grace the gift of a goodly offspring, for indeed You alone heed all Prayers. (37)

(37) Until then Zechariah had no issue. The sight of this pious young girl made him yearn for a child just as virtuous and devout. When he saw that God sent food to her, by dint of His limitless power, he felt hopeful that God might also bless him with issue, despite his old age.

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ یُّصَلِّیْ فِی الْمِحْرَابِ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ یُبَشِّرُكَ بِیَحْیٰی مُصَدِّقًۢا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ سَیِّدًا وَّ حَصُوْرًا وَّ نَبِیًّا مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِیْنَ ﴿۳۹﴾

(3-39) As he stood praying in the sanctuary, the angels called out to him: 'Allah gives you good tidings of John (Yahya),

(38) who shall confirm a command of Allah , (39) shall be outstanding among men, utterly chaste, and a Prophet from among the righteous.

(38) In the Bible his name is mentioned as John the Baptist. For information about him see Matthew 3, 9 and 14: Mark 1 and 6; Luke 1 and 3.

(39) The 'command from Allah' signifies Jesus (peace be on him). His birth took place as the result of an extraordinary command from God and in an unusual manner, hence he is designated as 'the command' or 'word' from Allah.

قَالَ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوْ نُ لِىْ غُلٰمٌ وَّ قَدْ بَلَغَنِىَ الْ كِبَرُ وَ امْ رَاَتِىْ عَاقِرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿۴۰﴾

(3-40) Zechariah exclaimed: 'My Lord! How shall I have a son when old age has overtaken me and my wife is barren?' He said: Thus shall it be; (40) Allah does what He wills.'

(40) God granted Zechariah a son despite his old age and despite the barrenness of his wife.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْ عَلْ لِّىْۤ اٰيَةً ؕ قَالَ اٰيَتُكَ اَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ اِلَّا رَمْزًا ؕ وَ اذْ كُرْ رَّبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا وَّ سَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِىِّ وَ الْاِبْكَارِ ﴿۴۱﴾

(3-41) Zechariah said: 'O my Lord! Appoint a sign for me.' (41) The angel said: 'The sign for you shall be that you shall not speak to men for three days except by gesture. Remember your Lord and extol His glory by night and by day.' (42)

(41) Here the request is made for some specific sign to be given by means of which Zechariah would come to know in advance when the unusual incident of the birth of a child to a couple, where the male was old and the female both old and barren, would take place.

(42) The real purpose of this discourse is to disclose to the Christians the error of their belief in Jesus as God and as the son of God. The subject is introduced by mentioning the birth of John (peace be on him), another miraculous birth which had taken place only six months before the birth of the Messiah (peace be on him) and among his own relatives. God wants to make the Christians ask themselves why the miraculous birth of Jesus should make him God when the similarly miraculous birth of John did not make him so.

وَ اِ ذ قَالَتِ ظمَلٰٓئِکَ یٰمَرۡیَمُ اِنَّ اللّٰ ۡطَفٰکِ وَ طَ ہَرَکِ وَ ۡٓ طَفٰکِ عَلٰی نِسَآءِ ط ۡلَمِیۡنَ ﴿۴۲﴾

(3-42) Then came the time when the angels said: 'O Mary! Behold, Allah has chosen you, and made you pure, and exalted you above all the women in the world.

یٰمَرۡیَمُ اقۡنُتِیۡ لِرَبِّکِ وَ اسۡجُدِیۡ وَ ارۡکَعِیۡ مَعَ الرّٰکِعِیۡنَ ﴿۴۳﴾

(3-43) O Mary! Remain devout to your Lord, and prostrate yourself in worship, and bow with those who bow (before Him).'

ذٰلِکَ مِنۡ اَنۡۢبَآءِ الۡغَیۡبِ نُوۡحِیۡہِ اِلَیۡکَ ؕ وَ مَا کُنۡتَ لَدَیۡہِمۡ اِذۡ یُلۡقُوۡنَ اَقۡلَامَہُمۡ اَیُّہُمۡ یَکۡفُلُ مَرۡیَمَ ۪ وَ مَا کُنۡتَ لَدَیۡہِمۡ اِذۡ یَخۡتَصِمُوۡنَ ﴿۴۴﴾

(3-44) (O Muhammad!) We reveal to you this account from a realm which lies beyond the reach of your perception for you were not with them when they drew lots with their pens about who should be Mary's guardian, (43) and you were not with them when they disputed about it.

(43) They drew lots to decide who should be the guardian of Mary, whose mother had consecrated her to the service of God in

the Temple. Since she was a girl, it was a delicate matter as to who from among the priests of the Temple would be the appropriate person to take care of her.

اِذ قَالَتِ الۡمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرۡيَمُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنۡهُ ۖ اسۡمُهُ الۡمَسِيۡحُ عِيۡسَى ابۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ وَجِيۡهًا فِى الدُّنۡيَا وَ الۡاٰخِرَةِ وَ مِنَ الۡمُقَرَّبِيۡنَ ۴۵

(3-45) And when the angels said: 'O Mary! Allah gives you the glad tidings of a command from Him: his name shall be Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary. He shall be highly honored in this world and in the Next, and shall be one of those near stationed to Allah.

وَ يُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِى الۡمَهۡدِ وَ كَهۡلًا وَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيۡنَ ۴۶

(3-46) And he shall speak to men in the cradle and also later when he grows to maturity and shall indeed be among the righteous.'

قَالَ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوۡنُ لِىۡ وَلَدٌ وَّلَمۡ يَمۡسَسۡنِىۡ بَشَرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكِ اللّٰهُ يَخۡلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ؕ اِذَا قَضٰٓى اَمۡرًا فَاِنَّمَا يَقُوۡلُ لَهٗ كُنۡ فَيَكُوۡنُ ۴۷

(3-47) She said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has ever touched me?' The angel answered: Thus shall it be. (44) Allah creates whatever He wills. When He decides something, He merely says: "Be" and it is.

(44) Thus it was affirmed that a child would be born to Mary despite the fact that no man had touched her. The angel's answer mentioned here, 'Thus shall it be', was exactly the same as the response given to Zechariah. Both the following sentences and the preceding section support the view that the angel had conveyed to Mary the glad tidings that a son would be born to her

without normal sexual contact, and it was thus that Jesus was born. For, if Mary's child was to be born to her in the usual manner in which children are born to women, and if the birth of Jesus did take place in the normal way, the entire narrative from (verse 35)of this surah to (verse 63) would have to be declared absurd.

Indeed, one would be forced to treat as meaningless all those statements about the birth of Jesus which are found scattered elsewhere in the Qur'an. The Christians had begun to regard Jesus as God and the son of God because of this fatherless birth. The Jews, in turn, cast aspersions on Mary's chastity on the grounds that she had given birth to a child despite being unmarried. If the fatherless birth of Jesus was itself false, it would have been sufficient to tell the Christians that they were indulging in sheer mis-statement, that Mary had indeed been married, that she had a legitimate husband, and that it was as a result of that wedlock that Jesus was born. If this fact could have been stated plainly, there would have been no need for long preparatory statements and complicated propositions, and no need to call Jesus the son of Mary instead of naming his father. For far from resolving the issue such statements add to the confusion. Those who believe the Qur'an to be the word or command from God and yet try to prove that the birth of Jesus took place in the normal manner, as a result of union between his father and mother, end up by proving only that God is less capable of clear expression than they are!

وَ يُعَلِّمُهُ الۡکِتٰبَ وَ الۡحِکۡمَۃَ وَ التَّوۡرٰىۃَ وَ الۡاِنۡجِیۡلَ ۴۸

(3-48) And He will teach him the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah, the Gospel,

وَ رَسُوۡلًا اِلٰی بَنِیۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِیۡلَ ۬ۙ اَنِّیۡ قَدۡ جِئۡتُکُمۡ بِاٰیَۃٍ مِّنۡ رَّبِّکُمۡ ۬ۙ اَنِّیۡۤ اَخۡلُقُ لَکُمۡ مِّنَ الطِّیۡنِ کَہَیۡـَٔۃِ الطَّیۡرِ فَاَنۡفُخُ فِیۡہِ فَیَکُوۡنُ طَیۡرًۢا بِاِذۡنِ اللّٰہِ ۚ وَ اُبۡرِئُ الۡاَکۡمَہَ وَ الۡاَبۡرَصَ وَ اُحۡیِ الۡمَوۡتٰی بِاِذۡنِ

اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ اُنَبِّئُكُمۡ بِمَا تَاۡكُلُوۡنَ وَ مَا تَدَّخِرُوۡنَ ۙ فِىۡ بُيُوۡتِكُمۡ ؕ اِنَّ فِىۡ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لَّكُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ مُّؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ۴۹

(3-49) and he will be a Messenger to the Children of Israel.' (And when he came to them he said): 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. I will make for you from clay the likeness of a bird and then I will breathe into it and by the leave of Allah it will become a bird. I will also heal the blind and the leper, and by the leave of Allah bring the dead to life. I will also inform you of what things you eat and what you treasure up in your houses. Surely this is a sign for you if you are true believers. (45)

(45) It is hinted here that these signs are sufficient proof that Jesus was designated by God, the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, provided people are prepared to accept the truth instead of obstinately clinging to their prejudiced views. This is further proof that Jesus had been entrusted with a mission by God. Had he not been designated by God but by an imposter he would surely have attempted to found an independent religion, exploiting his miracles to lead people away from their original faith. However, Jesus believed in, and confirmed, the validity of the teachings of the original religion which had been preached at God's behest by the earlier Prophets.

وَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيۡنَ يَدَىَّ مِنَ التَّوۡرٰىةِ وَ لِاُحِلَّ لَكُمۡ بَعۡضَ الَّذِىۡ حُرِّمَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَ جِئۡتُكُمۡ بِاٰيَةٍ مِّنۡ رَّبِّكُمۡ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيۡعُوۡنِ ۵۰

(3-50) And I have come to confirm the truth of whatever there still remains of the Torah, (46) and to make lawful to you some of the things which had been forbidden to you. (47) have come to you with a sign from your Lord; so have fear of Allah and obey me.

(46) The fact that Jesus preached the same religion as that expounded earlier by Moses and the other Prophets is also borne

out by the statements of the existing Gospels: According to Matthew, in his Sermon on the Mount the Messiah categorically declared: 'Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them' (Matthew 5: 17). And when a Jewish lawyer enquired: 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?', Jesus replied: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depends the law and the prophets' (ibid., 22: 37-40). He also instructed his disciples: The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice' (ibid., 23- 2-3).

(47) What Jesus wanted to impress upon them was that he would abolish the prohibitive innovations which had infiltrated the original Divine Law (Shariah). These were the results of the superstitions of their ignorant commoners, the legal hair-splitting of their lawyers, the extremism of their world-renouncing pietists, and the ascendancy and predominance of non-Muslim peoples over them. In determining what is lawful and unlawful, Jesus would be guided by the injunctions of God and not by the inventions of human beings.

اِنَّ اللّٰہَ رَبِّیۡ وَ رَبُّکُمۡ فَاعۡبُدُوۡہُ ؕ ہٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسۡتَقِیۡمٌ ﴿۵۱﴾

(3-51) Surely, Allah is my Lord and your Lord; so serve Him alone. This is the straightway.(48)

(48) This shows that as with the other Prophets, the fundamental points of Jesus' mission were the following:

(1) Man should acknowledge- the exclusive sovereignty of God which demands absolute service and obedience to Him, and Him alone. This principle serves as the basis for the entire structure of human morality and social behavior.

(2) Man should obey the Prophets since they are the representatives of the true Sovereign.

(3) The Law which should regulate man's conduct by elaborating what is right and what is wrong should be none other than the Law of God. The laws devised by others should be abrogated. There is, thus, no difference between the missions of Jesus, Moses and Muhammad (peace be on them all). Those who think that the missions of the Prophets differ from one another and who believe that their objectives vary have fallen into serious error. Whoever is sent by the Lord of the Universe to His creatures can have no other purpose than to dissuade God's subjects from disobeying Him and assuming an attitude of vanity and disregard towards Him, and to admonish them against associating anyone with God in His divinity (that is, either holding anyone to be a partner with the Lord of the Universe in His Sovereignty or recognizing others beside God as having a rightful claim on part of man's loyalty, devotion and worship), and to invite them all to be loyal to, and to serve, obey and worship God alone.

It is unfortunate that the Gospels in their present form do not offer as clear a picture of the mission of Jesus as that presented by the Qur'an. Nevertheless, we find scattered throughout the Gospels all the three fundamentals mentioned above. The notion that man ought to submit himself totally to God is embodied in the following statement:

'You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve' (Matthew 4: 10).

In addition, Jesus believed that the object of his efforts was that God's commands relating to the moral realm should be obeyed in this world in the sphere of human conduct just as His commands about the operation of the physical universe are obeyed in the heavens: 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven' (ibid., 6: 10).

The fact that Jesus presented himself as a Prophet and a representative of the Kingdom of Heaven, and that in this capacity he asked people to follow him is borne out by several

statements. When, for instance, he began his mission in Nazareth and when his own kith, kin and compatriots turned against him, he remarked: 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own country . . .' (Matthew 13- 57; see also Luke 4: 24 and Mark 6: 4). And when conspiracies were hatched in Jerusalem to put an end to his life, and people counselled him to go away, he replied: 'Nevertheless I must go on my way . . . for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem' (Luke 13- 33). When Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time the disciples cried with a loud voice: 'Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord' (Luke 19: 38). This angered the Pharisees, who asked Jesus to rebuke his disciples. But he replied: 'I tell you, if these were silent the very stones would cry out' (ibid., 19: 40). On another occasion he said: 'Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light' (Matthew 11: 28-30).

The fact that he invited people to obey the Laws of God rather than the laws made by man is evident from his response (found in both Matthew and Mark) to the objection raised by the Pharisees to the conduct of their disciples who ate with defiled hands, that is, without washing. 'Well did Isiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.'

And he said to them: 'You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother", and "He who speaks evil of his father or mother, let him surely die", but you say, "If a man tells his father or mother what you would have gained from me is Corban (that is, given to God), and then you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or mother, thus making void the word of God through your tradition which you hand on"' (Mark 7: 6-13; see also Matthew 15: 2-9).

فَلَمَّآ اَحَسَّ عِيْسٰى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ اَنْصَارِيْٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۭ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّوْنَ نَحْنُ اَنْصَارُ اللّٰهِ ۚ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ ۚ وَاشْهَدْ بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ۝۵۲

(3-52) And when Jesus perceived their leaning towards unbelief, he asked: 'Who will be my helpers in the way of Allah?' The disciples (49) said: 'We are the helpers of Allah. We believe in Allah, (50) and be our witness that we have submitted ourselves exclusively to Allah.

(49) The word hawari means approximately the same as the word ansar in the Islamic tradition. In the Bible the usual terms are 'apostles' and 'disciples'. Jesus' chosen disciples were called apostles in the sense that they had been entrusted with a mission by him rather than in the sense of having been entrusted with a mission by God.

(50) At various places the Qur'an characterizes man's participation in the effort to establish the supremacy of Islam as 'helping God'. This needs a little explanation. God has endowed man with the freedom of will and choice, with the result that He does not resort to His omnipotent will to compel man either to do certain things or to refrain from others. He rather leaves man free to adopt the course that pleases him - be it that of either belief or unbelief, of either obedience or disobedience. God prefers to instruct man by means of persuasive argument and admonition, so as to bring home to him that even though he is free to disbelieve, disobey and defy the Will of God, his own interest and well-being lie in serving and obeying his Creator.

Hence, directing people to the right path by persuasion and admonition is of concern to God, He regards those who contribute to this cause as His allies and helpers. This is, in fact, the most exalted position attainable by man. When a man performs Prayers, keeps his fast and worships God in other ways, he is merely on the level of service and subjection to God. But when a man strives to spread God's true religion and to enthrone it in actual life, he is honored with the status of God's ally and

helper, which is the zenith of man's spiritual growth. 'Literally, 'and be our witness that we are Muslims' - Ed.

رَبَّنَا اٰمَنَّا بِمَآ اَنۡزَلۡتَ وَ اتَّبَعۡنَا الرَّسُوۡلَ فَاكۡتُبۡنَا مَعَ الشّٰهِدِيۡنَ ۵۳

(3-53) Our Lord! We believe in the commandment You have revealed and we obey the Messenger; make us, then, one of those who bear witness (to the Truth).'

وَ مَكَرُوۡا وَ مَكَرَ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ خَيۡرُ الۡمٰكِرِيۡنَ ۵۴

(3-54) Then they schemed (against the Messiah), and Allah countered their schemes by schemes of His own. Allah is the best of schemers.

اِذۡ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيۡسٰۤى اِنِّىۡ مُتَوَفِّيۡكَ وَ رَافِعُكَ اِلَىَّ وَ مُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا وَ جَاعِلُ الَّذِيۡنَ اتَّبَعُوۡكَ فَوۡقَ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡۤا اِلٰى يَوۡمِ الۡقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَىَّ مَرۡجِعُكُمۡ فَاَحۡكُمُ بَيۡنَكُمۡ فِيۡمَا كُنۡتُمۡ فِيۡهِ تَخۡتَلِفُوۡنَ ۵۵

(3-55) (And it was part of His scheme) when Allah said: 'O Jesus! I will recall you (51) and raise you up to Me and will purify you (of the company) of those who disbelieve, (52) and will set your followers above the unbelievers till the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me you shall return, and I will judge between you regarding what you differed.

(51) The expression used is mutawaffika. The original meaning of tawaffa is to take and receive. To 'seize a person's sou!' constitutes the figurative rather than the literal meaning of the word. Here the word is used in the sense of 'recall', for example, the recall of an official from his work. The Israelites had persisted in their disobedience, and despite repeated warnings and admonitions their collective behavior had become increasingly corrupt. They had killed a succession of Prophets and were out to shed the blood of all those who invited them to righteousness and moral rectitude. In order to complete His argument against them,

and to give them a last chance to reform themselves, God sent to them two great Prophets, Jesus and John the Baptist. These Prophets carried with them such overwhelming proof of their designation by God that no ground was left for anyone to disbelieve in them, except those who were obstinately hostile to the Truth and who had become exceedingly bold in their opposition to it.

Yet the Israelites let this last opportunity slip away. They not only spurned the message of the Prophets but also brazenly indulged in many other atrocious crimes. One of their chiefs had John beheaded at the behest of a dancing girl, and their priests and scribes conspired to have Jesus put to death by the Roman authorities. Further admonition would have been a sheer waste of time. God, therefore, decided to recall His Prophet and condemned the Israelites to perpetual disgrace.

It should be noted that this whole discourse (verses 3- 33 ff.) is devoted to repudiating the Christian belief in the godhead of Jesus, and to reforming their beliefs. The main reasons for the spread of these false beliefs were: (i) the miraculous birth of Jesus; (ii) the miracles which he performed; and (iii) his ascension into heaven (which is mentioned categorically in the Christian scriptures). The Qur'an confirms the miraculous birth of Jesus and asserts that this fatherless birth is a manifestation of God's omnipotence. God creates whomsoever He wills and in the manner He chooses. This extraordinary birth neither proves that Jesus was God nor that he had any share in God's godhead. The miracles of Jesus are also verified by the Qur'an; in fact it enumerates them one by one. The Quran, however, makes it clear that Jesus performed these miracles in accordance with God's will, and not of his own innate power.

Had the traditions cherished by the Christians regarding Jesus' ascension into heaven been without foundation, they would have been told that he whom they regarded as either God or the son of God had died long ago and become part of the earth, and that if they wanted to satisfy themselves on that score they could go and witness for themselves his grave at a certain place. But

not only does the Qur'an not make any categorical statement that Jesus died, it employs an expression which, to say the least, contains the possibility of being interpreted as meaning that he had been raised into heaven alive. Further, the Qur'an tells the Christians that Jesus, contrary to their belief, was not crucified. This means that the man who cried out at the end of his life: 'Eli, Eli, lama sabach-thani?', that is, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Matthew 27: 46), and the one whose image was seen on the cross was not Christ; God had already raised Christ into heaven.

As for those who try to interpret these Qur'anic verses as indicating the death of Jesus, they actually prove only that God is incapable of expressing His ideas in clear, lucid terms.

(52) The words 'those who disbelieve' here refer to the Jews whom Jesus had invited to believe, and who had refused that invitation. The expression: 'your followers', if it denotes the true followers of Jesus, can only mean Muslims. Should 'followers' signify all those who profess allegiance to Jesus, it would include both Christians and Muslims.

فَاَمَّا الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا فَاُعَذِّبُهُمۡ عَذَابًا شَدِيۡدًا فِى الدُّنۡيَا وَ الۡاٰخِرَةِ ۫ وَ مَا لَهُمۡ مِّنۡ نّٰصِرِيۡنَ ۝٥٦

(3-56) As for those who disbelieved, I shall punish them with a terrible chastisement in this world and in the Next; and they shall find none to help them.

وَ اَمَّا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيۡهِمۡ اُجُوۡرَهُمۡ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ۝٥٧

(3-57) But those who believe and do righteous deeds, He will reward them in full. Allah does not love the unjust.'

ذٰلِكَ نَتۡلُوۡهُ عَلَيۡكَ مِنَ الۡاٰيٰتِ وَ الذِّكۡرِ الۡحَكِيۡمِ ۝٥٨

(3-58) What We recite to you consists of signs and wise admonition.

اِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيۡسٰى عِنۡدَ اللّٰهِ كَمَثَلِ اٰدَمَ ؕ خَلَقَهٗ مِنۡ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهٗ كُنۡ فَيَكُوۡنُ ۝٥٩

(3-59) Surely, in the sight of Allah, the similitude of the creation of Jesus is as the creation of Adam whom He created out of dust, and then said: 'Be', and he was.(53)

(53) This means that if Jesus' miraculous birth is sufficient proof that he should be regarded either as God or as the son of God then there are even stronger grounds to apply this to Adam. For, while Jesus was born without a father, Adam was born with neither father nor mother.

اَلۡحَقُّ مِنۡ رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنۡ مِّنَ الۡمُمۡتَرِيۡنَ ۝٦٠

(3-60) This is the truth from your Lord; be not, then, among those who doubt.(54)

(54) The main points set before the Christians so far are the following: First, it was impressed upon them that none of the various arguments which gave rise to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus provided valid grounds to support that doctrine. Jesus was merely a human being whom God had created in an extraordinary manner for reasons best known to Him. God had also invested Jesus with the power to perform certain miracles by means of which he could categorically establish his claim to prophethood. It seems perfectly reasonable that God should not have allowed such an extraordinary person to be crucified by unbelievers and should have raised him up to Himself. As the Sovereign, God has the power to treat any of His subjects as He wishes. How can this extraordinary treatment of Jesus justify the conclusion that the subject was himself either the Sovereign, the son of the Sovereign or an associate with Him in His Sovereignty?

Second, the message of Muhammad (peace be on him) is the same as that of Jesus. The missions of the two are identical.

Third, even after [the ascension of] Jesus the religion of his disciples remained the same, namely, Islam, which is now expounded by the Qur'an. What has happened is that, in the course of time, the Christians have abandoned the teachings of Christ, and have deviated from the religion followed by the early disciples of Jesus.

فَمَنۡ حَآجَّكَ فِيۡهِ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الۡعِلۡمِ ۙ فَقُلۡ تَعَالَوۡا نَدۡعُ اَبۡنَآءَنَا وَ اَبۡنَآءَكُمۡ وَ نِسَآءَنَا وَ نِسَآءَكُمۡ وَ اَنۡفُسَنَا وَ اَنۡفُسَكُمۡ ۟ ثُمَّ نَبۡتَهِلۡ فَنَجۡعَلۡ لَّعۡنَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الۡكٰذِبِيۡنَ ﴿۶۱﴾

(3-61) Tell whoever disputes with you on this matter after true knowledge has come to you: 'Come! Let us summon our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and ourselves and yourselves, and then let us pray together and invoke the curse of Allah on those who lie.' (55)

(55) The real aim in suggesting this procedure for deciding the dispute was to prove that the attitude of those amongst the delegation of Najran was one of deliberate stubbornness and intransigence. They had no sound arguments to contradict any of the points mentioned above, and they could not find any shred of evidence in their own scriptures upon which they could claim, with firm conviction, that their beliefs were true. Moreover, all that the members of the deputation had come to know of the character, teachings and achievements of the Prophet had made them more or less convinced of his prophethood, and at least caused their disbelief to waver. When they were told that if they had full confidence in the truth of their beliefs they should come forward and pray to God that His curse should fall on the deniers of the truth, none of them came forward. It thus became clear all over Arabia that the priests and leaders of Christianity in Najran, whose holiness was celebrated far and wide, followed beliefs, the truth of which, they themselves were not fully confident in.

اِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الۡقَصَصُ الۡحَقُّ ۚ وَ مَا مِنۡ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ؕ وَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُوَ الۡعَزِيۡزُ الۡحَكِيۡمُ ﴿۶۲﴾

(3-62) This is the true story. There is no God but Allah, and assuredly Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.

فَاِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيۡمٌۢ بِالۡمُفۡسِدِيۡنَ ﴿۶۳﴾

(3-63) And if they turn their backs, truly Allah knows those who cause mischief.

قُلۡ يٰۤاَهۡلَ الۡكِتٰبِ تَعَالَوۡا اِلٰى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۢ بَيۡنَنَا وَبَيۡنَكُمۡ اَلَّا نَعۡبُدَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَلَا نُشۡرِكَ بِهٖ شَيۡـًٔا وَّلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعۡضُنَا بَعۡضًا اَرۡبَابًا مِّنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنۡ تَوَلَّوۡا فَقُوۡلُوا اشۡهَدُوۡا بِاَنَّا مُسۡلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۶۴﴾

(3-64) Say: (56) 'People of the Book! Come to a word common between us and you: (57) that we shall serve none but Allah and shall associate none with Him in His divinity and that some of us will not take others as lords beside Allah.' And if they turn their backs (from accepting this call), tell them: 'Bear witness that we are the ones who have submitted ourselves exclusively to Allah.'

(56) This marks the beginning of the third discourse of this surah. Its contents invite the conclusion that the surah was revealed sometime between the battles of Badr and Uhud. The subjects of these three discourses are so closely interrelated that some commentators have wrongly understood the verses which follow to be part of the foregoing discourse. From the whole tenor of the discourse which now begins, however, it is evident that it is addressed to the Jews.

(57) The invitation here is for the two parties to agree on something believed in by one of them, the Muslims, and the soundness of which could hardly be denied by the other party, the Christians. For this was the belief of their own Prophets and had been taught in their own scriptures.

يٰۤاَهۡلَ الۡكِتٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّوۡنَ فِىۡۤ اِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ وَمَاۤ اُنۡزِلَتِ التَّوۡرٰىةُ وَالۡاِنۡجِيۡلُ اِلَّا مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِهٖ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعۡقِلُوۡنَ ﴿۶۵﴾

(3-65) People of the Book! Why do you dispute with us about Abraham even though the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed until after the time of Abraham? Do you not understand? (58)

(58) That is, both Judaism and Christianity came into existence after the Torah and the Injil had been revealed; Abraham had lived much earlier than that. Thus it can easily be grasped that the religion of Abraham could not have been that of either Judaism or Christianity. If Abraham was on the right path and had attained salvation it is obvious that one need not follow either, Judaism or Christianity in order to be on the right path and to attain salvation. See also (Surah 2, nn. 135 and 141 above.)

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَٰجَجْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٦٦

(3-66) Behold, you are those who have disputed greatly concerning matters which you knew; why are you now disputing about matters that you know nothing about? Allah knows it whereas you do not know.

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَٰهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَٰكِن كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُّسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ٦٧

(3-67) Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian; he was a Muslim, wholly devoted to God. (59) And he certainly was not amongst those who associate others with Allah in His divinity.

(59) The word hanif denotes someone who turns his face away from all other directions in order to follow one particular course. We have tried to convey this sense through the expression: 'a Muslim, wholly devoted to God'.

اِنَّ اَوۡلَى النَّاسِ بِاِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ لَلَّذِيۡنَ اتَّبَعُوۡهُ وَهٰذَا النَّبِىُّ وَالَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ وَلِىُّ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ﴿۶۸﴾

(3-68) Surely the people who have the best claim to a relationship with Abraham are those who followed him in the past, and presently this Prophet and those who believe in him; Allah is the guardian of the men of faith.

وَدَّتۡ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنۡ اَهۡلِ الۡكِتٰبِ لَوۡ يُضِلُّوۡنَكُمۡ ؕ وَمَا يُضِلُّوۡنَ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ وَمَا يَشۡعُرُوۡنَ ﴿۶۹﴾

(3-69) A party of the People of the Book would fain lead you astray, whereas in truth they lead none astray except themselves, but they do not realize it.

يٰۤاَهۡلَ الۡكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَكۡفُرُوۡنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَاَنۡتُمۡ تَشۡهَدُوۡنَ ﴿۷۰﴾

(3-70) O People of the Book! Why do you reject the signs of Allah even though you yourselves witness them? (60)

(60) Another rendering of this could be, 'and you yourselves bear witness' to Muhammad's prophethood. However it is translated the sense remains the same. In fact, the impeccable purity of the life of the Prophet, the astounding impact of his teachings and training on the lives of his Companions, and the loftiness of the teachings of the Qur'an all constituted such illustrious signs of God that it was very difficult for anyone conversant with the lives of the Prophets and the tenor of Divine Scriptures to doubt the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be on him).

It is a fact that many Jews and Christians (especially their scholars) came, to recognize in their hearts that Muhammad was the very Prophet whose coming had been announced by the preceding Prophets. This fact was so overwhelming that, despite their intransigence, they could not help but give verbal expression, at times, to the truth of the Prophet's teachings. This is why the Qur'an repeatedly blames them for maliciously

misrepresenting the signs of God which they saw with their own eyes and to which they themselves attested.

يٰٓاَهۡلَ الۡكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَلۡبِسُوۡنَ الۡحَقَّ بِالۡبَاطِلِ وَتَكۡتُمُوۡنَ الۡحَقَّ وَاَنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۷۱﴾

(3-71) People of the Book! Why do you confound Truth with falsehood, and why do you conceal the Truth knowingly?

وَقَالَتۡ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنۡ اَهۡلِ الۡكِتٰبِ اٰمِنُوۡا بِالَّذِىۡۤ اُنۡزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا وَجۡهَ النَّهَارِ وَاكۡفُرُوۡۤا اٰخِرَهٗ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَرۡجِعُوۡنَ ﴿۷۲﴾

(3-72) A party of the People of the Book said: 'Believe in the morning what has been revealed to those who believe, and then deny it in the evening that they may thus retract (from their faith).' (61)

(61) This was one of the devices adopted by the leaders and rabbis of the Jews who lived on the outskirts of Madinah in order to damage the mission of Islam. To demoralize the Muslims and create misgivings about the Prophet (peace be on him), they sent their agents to embrace Islam publicly, then to renounce it, and subsequently to go about telling people they had done so because of the faults they had found in Islam, the Muslims and their Prophet.

وَلَا تُؤۡمِنُوۡۤا اِلَّا لِمَنۡ تَبِعَ دِيۡنَكُمۡ ؕ قُلۡ اِنَّ الۡهُدٰى هُدَى اللّٰهِ ۙ اَنۡ يُّؤۡتٰۤى اَحَدٌ مِّثۡلَ مَاۤ اُوۡتِيۡتُمۡ اَوۡ يُحَآجُّوۡكُمۡ عِنۡدَ رَبِّكُمۡ ؕ قُلۡ اِنَّ الۡفَضۡلَ بِيَدِ اللّٰهِ ۚ يُؤۡتِيۡهِ مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۷۳﴾

(3-73) They also say among themselves: 'Do not follow anyone except him who follows your faith.' Say: 'Surely true guidance is Allah's. It is His favor that anyone should be given the like of what you have been given in the past, and that others should have been given firm evidence to proffer against you before your Lord.' Say: 'Surely bounty is in the Hand of Allah; He gives it to whom He wills. Allah is All-Embracing, (62) All-Knowing. (63)

(62) The word wasi' which is used here occurs in the Qur'an in three contexts. The first context is the narrow-mindedness and mean outlook of certain people, in contrast to which God is not 'narrow'. The second context is the denunciation of miserliness, meanness and niggardliness, in contrast to which God is Generous and Munificent. The third context is the ascription of finite, limited concepts to God as a result of their limited imagination, whereas the truth is that God is infinite see (Surah 2, n. 116 above)

(63) That is, God knows who deserves to be honored and exalted.

يَّخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ٧٤

(3-74) He singles out for His mercy whomever He wills, Allah is possessed of abounding bounty.'

وَمِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مَنْ اِنْ تَاْمَنْهُ بِقِنْطَارٍ يُّؤَدِّهٖٓ اِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ اِنْ تَاْمَنْهُ بِدِيْنَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهٖٓ اِلَيْكَ اِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَآئِمًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِى الْاُمِّيّٖنَ سَبِيْلٌ ۚ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ٧٥

(3-75) And among the People of the Book there are some who would restore you even if you were to entrust a treasure of gold, and of them there are some whom were you to entrust with one gold piece, will not restore it unless you stand over them. That is because they say: 'We will not be taken to task for whatever we may do to non-Jews (ummls).(64) Thus they falsely fix a lie upon Allah, and do so wittingly.

(64) This was not merely the misconception of the ignorant mass of Jews. Their religious teaching was the same and the legal doctrines of their accepted religious authorities and jurists reflected this idea. With regard to injunctions on loans and

interest the Bible makes a clear distinction between an Israelite and a non-Israelite (Deuteronomy 15: 1-3; 23- 20).

It is stated in the Talmud that if the bullock of an Israelite injures the bullock of a non-Israelite the former is not liable to any penalty, but not vice versa. Similarly, it is laid down that if anyone finds an unclaimed article he should enquire amongst the people who live nearby. If they are Israelites he should announce his find; if not he may keep it without saying anything further.

Rabbi Samuel Ishmael says that if a dispute between a Jew and a Gentile is brought before a judge, he should base his verdict on Jewish law if it is favorable; if the law of the Gentiles goes in favor of the Jew he should justify his judgement by saying that the Gentile has no valid ground for complaint since judgement was given according to his own law. Even if both laws are unfavorable towards the Jew the judge should still find some pretext for deciding in his favor. Rabbi Samuel says that benefit should be derived from every mistake the non-Israelite may make. (See Paul Isaac Hershon, Talmudic Miscellany, London, 1880, pp. 37 and 210-21)

بَلٰى مَنۡ اَوۡفٰى بِعَهۡدِهٖ وَ اتَّقٰى فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ﴿۷۶﴾

(3-76) But Allah loves only those who fulfil their covenant and fear Allah. Truly Allah loves the God-fearing.

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ يَشۡتَرُوۡنَ بِعَهۡدِ اللّٰهِ وَ اَيۡمَانِهِمۡ ثَمَنًا قَلِيۡلًا اُولٰٓئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمۡ فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ وَ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَ لَا يَنۡظُرُ اِلَيۡهِمۡ يَوۡمَ الۡقِيٰمَةِ وَ لَا يُزَكِّيۡهِمۡ وَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۷۷﴾

(3-77) There shall be no share in the Life to Come for those who sell away the covenant of Allah and their oaths for a trivial gain. On the Day of Resurrection Allah will neither address them, look at them, nor will He purify them.[65] A painful chastisement lies ahead of them.

(65) The reason is that, despite their worst crimes, they still thought that on the Day of Judgement they alone would be

honored with God's favor, and that towards them alone He would turn His gracious attention. They also entertained the belief that if they had been stained by any trace of sin, it would be washed away by the grace of their pious elders. Such people are warned here that the treatment meted out to them in the Next Life will be altogether contrary to their expectations.

وَ اِنَّ مِنۡہُم لَفَرِیۡقًا یَّلۡوٗنَ اَلۡسِنَتَہُم بِالۡکِتٰبِ لِتَحۡسَبُوۡہُ مِنَ الۡکِتٰبِ وَ مَا ہُوَ مِنَ الۡکِتٰبِ وَ یَقُوۡلُوۡنَ ہُوَ مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰہِ وَ مَا ہُوَ مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰہِ ۚ وَ یَقُوۡلُوۡنَ عَلَی اللّٰہِ الۡکَذِبَ وَ ہُمۡ یَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۷۸﴾

(3-78) And there is a party among them who twist their tongues while reciting the Book to make you think that it is part of the Book when in fact it is not. (66) They say: 'It is from Allah', when in fact it is not from Allah. They falsely fix a lie upon Allah, and do so wittingly.

(66) This could mean that they either distort the meaning of the Scriptures or twist the words of the text in order to misinterpret it. Its real meaning, however, seems to be that when, during their reading of the Scriptures, they encounter any word or sentence which goes against their interests, and the beliefs and notions which they cherish, they distort the meaning of it by deliberately twisting their tongues. Instances of such tongue-twisting are not altogether wanting among those who, despite their belief in the Qur'an, share some of these people's characteristics. For instance, some people who stress the superhuman character of the Prophet (peace be on him) misread the following verse: innama ana basharun mithlukum (Quran 18: 110) (I am nothing but a human being like you), replacing innama by inna ma ana and translate it: '(O Prophet), say to them: "I am not a human being like you."

مَا کَانَ لِبَشَرٍ اَنۡ یُّؤۡتِیَہُ اللّٰہُ الۡکِتٰبَ وَ الۡحُکۡمَ وَ النُّبُوَّۃَ ثُمَّ یَقُوۡلَ لِلنَّاسِ کُوۡنُوۡا عِبَادًا لِّیۡ مِنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰہِ وَ لٰکِنۡ کُوۡنُوۡا رَبّٰنِیّٖنَ بِمَا کُنۡتُمۡ تُعَلِّمُوۡنَ الۡکِتٰبَ وَ بِمَا کُنۡتُمۡ تَدۡرُسُوۡنَ ﴿۷۹﴾

(3-79) It does not befit a man that Allah should grant him His Book and sound judgement and prophet-hood, and thereafter he should say to men: 'Become servants to me apart from Allah.' He would rather say: 'Become dedicated men of Allah,(67) in accord with the dictates of the Book you have been teaching and studying.'

(67) The term rabbani is used here to denote Jewish religious scholars and functionaries who were supposed to provide true religious guidance to establish their rites of worship, implement religious laws, and so on. The same word occurs in(Surah 5: 44 and 63). In the Christian tradition the word 'divine' is used as an equivalent to the word rabbani.

وَ لَا يَا مُرَكُمۡ اَنۡ تَتَّخِذُوا الۡمَلٰٓئِكَۃَ وَ النَّبِيّٖنَ اَرۡبَابًا ؕ اَيَاۡمُرُكُمۡ بِالۡكُفۡرِ بَعۡدَ اِذۡ اَنۡتُمۡ مُّسۡلِمُوۡنَ ۸۰

(3-80) He will never enjoin you to take the angels or Prophets for your lords. Will he enjoin upon you unbelief when you have submitted yourselves to Allah? (68)

(68) This refutation is directed at all the false concepts which were attributed to the Messengers of God by various nations, and then made an integral part of the religious scriptures. These concepts were false in that they elevated either the Prophets or the angels to the level of deities

وَ اِذۡ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيۡثَاقَ النَّبِيّٖنَ لَمَاۤ اٰتَيۡتُكُمۡ مِّنۡ كِتٰبٍ وَّ حِكۡمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَآءَكُمۡ رَسُوۡلٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمۡ لَتُؤۡمِنُنَّ بِهٖ وَ لَتَنۡصُرُنَّهٗ ؕ قَالَ ءَاَقۡرَرۡتُمۡ وَ اَخَذۡتُمۡ عَلٰى ذٰلِكُمۡ اِصۡرِىۡ ؕ قَالُوۡۤا اَقۡرَرۡنَا ؕ قَالَ فَاشۡهَدُوۡا وَ اَنَا مَعَكُمۡ مِّنَ الشّٰهِدِيۡنَ ۸۱

(3-81) And recall when Allah took a covenant from the Prophets: 'This is the Book and the Wisdom which I have given you. But should a Prophet come to you confirming that which is

already with you, you shall believe in him and shall help him.(69) So saying, Allah asked: 'Do you agree and accept to take up the burden of the covenant?' They answered: 'We agree,' He said: 'Then bear witness; and I will be with you among the witness.

(69) A party of the People of the Book would fain lead you astray, whereas in truth they lead none astray except themselves, but they do not realize it.

فَمَنۡ تَوَلّٰى بَعۡدَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الۡفٰسِقُوۡنَ ﴿۸۲﴾

(3-82) Then whosoever shall turn away from this covenant they are the transgressors. (70)

(70) People of the Book! Why do you reject the signs of Allah even though you yourselves witness them?

اَفَغَيۡرَ دِيۡنِ اللّٰهِ يَبۡغُوۡنَ وَلَهٗۤ اَسۡلَمَ مَنۡ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالۡاَرۡضِ طَوۡعًا وَّكَرۡهًا وَّاِلَيۡهِ يُرۡجَعُوۡنَ ﴿۸۳﴾

(3-83) Do they now seek a religion other than prescribed by Allah even though all that is in the heavens and the earth is in submission to Him (71) - willing or unwillingly - and to Him all shall return?

(71) The basic principle characterizing the universe, in other words the religion of the universe and of every part of it, is Islam; insofar as the universe is in a state of total obedience and service to the Will of God. Here people are asked if they would follow a way of life different from Islam though they are part of the universe which is characterized by submission to God (Islam).

لِ قُ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَ مَ اُنزِلَ عَلَيۡنَا وَ مَ اُنزِلَ عَلٰٓى اِبۡرٰهِيمَ وَاِسۡمٰعِيلَ وَاِسۡحٰقَ وَيَعۡقُوبَ وَ
الۡاَسۡبَاطِ وَ مَ اُوۡتِىَ مُوسٰى وَ عِيسٰى وَ النَّبِيُّوۡنَ مِنۡ رَّبِّهِمۡ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيۡنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنۡهُمۡ وَنَحۡنُ
لَهٗ مُسۡلِمُوۡنَ ۸۴

(3-84) Say: 'We believe in Allah and what was revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and to Issac and Jacob and his descendants, and the teachings which Allah gave to Moses and Jesus and to other Prophets. We make no distinction between any of them (72) and to Him do we submit.

(72) They are told that it is not the habit of Muslims either to believe in Prophets and disbelieve in others or to affirm to the truth of some call others false. Muslims are free from narrow prejudices and chauvinistic loyalties. The true attitude of Muslims is to bear witness to truth of every Messenger of God, irrespective of where and when he appears.

وَمَنۡ يَّبۡتَغِ غَيۡرَ الۡاِسۡلَامِ دِيۡنًا فَلَنۡ يُّقۡبَلَ مِنۡهُ وَ هُوَ فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ الۡخٰسِرِيۡنَ ۸۵

(3-85) And whoever seeks a way other than this way a submission (Islam), will find that it will not be accepted from him and in the Life to come he will be among the losers.

كَيۡفَ يَهۡدِى اللّٰهُ قَوۡمًا كَفَرُوۡا بَعۡدَ اِيۡمَانِهِمۡ وَ شَهِدُوۡۤا اَنَّ الرَّسُوۡلَ حَقٌّ وَّ جَآءَهُمُ الۡبَيِّنٰتُ ؕ وَ
اللّٰهُ لَا يَهۡدِى الۡقَوۡمَ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ۸۶

(3-86) How can Allah guide people who once believed, after they received clear signs and affirmed that the Messenger was a true one, lapsed into disbelief. (73) Allah does not guide the wrong-doers.

(73) This is a repetition of the statement made earlier, namely that the Jewish rabbis of Arabia in the time of the Prophet (peace be on him) knew, and sometimes even testified to verbally, that Muhammad was a true Prophet and that his teachings were the

same as those of the earlier Prophets. (See for instance Qur'an 2: 89 - Ed.) Their subsequent attitude - namely that of rejection and opposition - was the outcome of prejudice and intransigence, born out of their centuries-old hostility to the Truth.

أُولٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم اَنَّ عَلَيۡهِمۡ لَعۡنَةَ اللّٰهِ وَالۡمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ اَجۡمَعِيۡنَ ۙ﴿۸۷﴾

(3-87) The recompense for their wrong-doing is that the curse of Allah and of the angels and of all men shall upon them.

خٰلِدِيۡنَ فِيۡهَا ۚ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنۡهُمُ الۡعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمۡ يُنۡظَرُوۡنَ ۙ﴿۸۸﴾

(3-88) Thus shall they abide. Neither shall their chastisement be granted nor shall they be granted any respite.

اِلَّا الَّذِيۡنَ تَابُوۡا مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ ذٰلِكَ وَاَصۡلَحُوۡا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِيۡمٌ ﴿۸۹﴾

(3-89) But those who repent and mend their ways shall be excepted for indeed Allah is Forgiving, All-Compassionate.

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا بَعۡدَ اِيۡمَانِهِمۡ ثُمَّ ازۡدَادُوۡا كُفۡرًا لَّنۡ تُقۡبَلَ تَوۡبَتُهُمۡ ۚ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الضَّآلُّوۡنَ ﴿۹۰﴾

(3-90) Those who relieved and have hardened in their disbelief after once believing, (74) their (pretense to) repentance shall not be accepted. Indeed such men have altogether strayed.

(74) They were not content with just rejecting the call to the Truth but stood in vehement opposition and hostility to it and spared no efforts in obstructing people from following the way of God. They created doubts, spread misgivings, sowed the seeds of distrust and engaged in the worst conspiracies and machinations in order to frustrate the mission of the Prophet (peace be on him).

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا وَمَاتُوۡا وَهُمۡ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنۡ يُّقۡبَلَ مِنۡ اَحَدِهِمۡ مِّلۡءُ الۡاَرۡضِ ذَهَبًا وَّلَوِ افۡتَدٰى بِهٖ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ وَّمَا لَهُمۡ مِّنۡ نّٰصِرِيۡنَ ﴿۹۱﴾

(3-91) Truly those who disbelieved and died as unbelievers, not even an earth full of gold will be accepted from them as ransom. For such people there is painful chastisement; and none shall come to their help.

لَن تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنفِقُوا مِن شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

(3-92) You shall not attain righteousness until you spend out of what you love (in the way of Allah). (75) Allah knows whatever you spend.

(75) The purpose of this verse is to remove the misconception of the Jews concerning 'righteousness'. The Jews had inherited an elaborate legal code which had accumulated as a result of the casuistry and hair-splitting legalism of their jurists. Their notion of 'righteousness' consisted of outward, formal conformity to that code and they evaluated all day-to-day actions, especially the trivial ones, in terms of conformity to that code. Narrow-mindedness, greed, covetousness, meanness, concealment of the Truth and readiness to barter with it lay beneath this veneer of formal piety. They were, nevertheless, considered pious in the minds of the people; Jewish public opinion condoned their conduct because it conformed to its concept of 'righteousness'.

In order to remove this misconception they are told that the things they considered fundamental to righteous conduct are of little consequence. The real spirit of righteousness consists in the love of God - a love which makes man value the good pleasure of God above all worldly acquisitions. If the love of anything seizes a man's mind to such an extent that he is unable to sacrifice it for the sake of the love of God, then that thing has virtually become an idol, and until he smashes it the door to righteousness will remain closed to him. If a man lacks this spirit, then his excessively formal and legalistic approach in religious matters can be considered no more than glossy paint over a piece of hollow, worm-eaten wood. It may be possible to deceive human beings by the sheer luster of the outer paint, but not God.

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِيٓ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلَ اِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلُ عَلٰى نَفۡسِهٖ مِنۡ قَبۡلِ اَنۡ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوۡرٰىةُ ؕ قُلۡ فَاۡتُوۡا بِالتَّوۡرٰىةِ فَاتۡلُوۡهَآ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ صٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۹۳﴾

(3-93) All food (that is lawful in the Law revealed to Muhammad) was lawful to the Children of Israel, (76) except what Israel (77) made unlawful to themselves before the revelation of the Torah. Tell them: 'Bring the Torah and recite any passage of it if you are truthful.'

(76) When the Jewish rabbis found no grounds for criticizing the fundamental teachings of the Prophet (there was no difference between the teachings of the previous Prophets and that of the Arabian Prophet on matters which constitute the core of religion), they raised objections about the details of religious law. The first objection was that the Prophet (peace be on him) had declared lawful a number of things which had been reckoned as unlawful since the time of the ancient Prophets. What is said here is a refutation of that objection.

(77) If 'Israel' is taken to mean the 'Children of Israel' then the interpretation of this verse must be that before the revelation of the Torah they treated a number of things as prohibited on the grounds of custom and usage alone. If, however, 'Israel' signifies Jacob (Ya'qub) then, the meaning is that he avoided the use of certain foods, which his descendants wrongly understood to be religiously prohibited, as a result of either a temperamental dislike or an ailment. This latter version is more commonly accepted. It becomes clear from the next verse that the Biblical injunction regarding the prohibition of the flesh of camels and rabbits was not part of the original Torah but an interpolation by Jewish doctors. (For a detailed discussion see (Surah 6, n. 122 below.)

فَمَنِ افۡتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ الۡكَذِبَ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

(3-94) Those who falsely fix lies upon Allah despite this are the wrongdoers.

لۡ صَدَقَ اللّٰہُ ۟ فَاتَّبِعُوۡا مِلَّۃَ اِبۡرٰہِیۡمَ حَنِیۡفًا ؕ وَ مَا کَانَ مِنَ الۡ مُشۡرِکِیۡنَ ﴿۹۵﴾

(3-95) Say: 'Whatever Allah has said is true. Follow, then, the way of Abraham in total devotion to Allah. He was not one of those who associate others with Allah in His divinity. (78)

(78) The Jews had enmeshed themselves in legalistic minutiae and these had become their major concern. They had abandoned service to the One True God and had allowed their religious life to become corrupted by polytheism. Instead of attending to the fundamentals of religion they indulged in discussions about questions that had only arisen because of the hair-splitting legalism of their scholars during their centuries of decadence.

اِنَّ اَوَّلَ بَیۡتٍ وُّضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِیۡ بِبَکَّۃَ مُبٰرَکًا وَّ ہُدًی لِّلۡعٰلَمِیۡنَ ﴿۹۶﴾

(3-96) Behold, the first House (of Prayer) established for mankind is the one at Bakkah: it is full of blessing and a centre of guidance for the whole world. (79)

(79) The second objection raised by the Jews was that the direction for Prayer had been changed from Jerusalem to the Kabah. This objection is answered in (Surah 2 see verses 142 ff. and nn. 142 and 147 above) The Bible, itself, testifies that Jerusalem was built by Solomon more than four and a half centuries after Moses (see 1 Kings 6: 1), and that it was during his time that the worshippers of the One God began to pray towards it (1 Kings 8: 29-30). It is established by traditions from numerous sources which are undisputed throughout Arabia, however, that the Kabah was constructed by Abraham who lived some eight or nine centuries before Moses. That the Kabah was older than the Temple of Jerusalem was beyond dispute.

فِيۡهِ اٰيٰتٌۢ بَيِّنٰتٌ مَّقَامُ اِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ ۚ وَمَنۡ دَخَلَهٗ كَانَ اٰمِنًا ؕ وَلِلّٰهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الۡبَيۡتِ مَنِ اسۡتَطَاعَ اِلَيۡهِ سَبِيۡلًا ؕ وَمَنۡ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِىٌّ عَنِ الۡعٰلَمِيۡنَ ۹۷

(3-97) In it there are clear signs and the station of Abraham; (80) whoever enters it becomes secure. (81) Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to Allah by all who can make their way to it. As for those who refuse to follow His command, surely Allah does not stand in need of anything.

(80) Here it is stressed that there are several clear signs which prove that the Makkan sanctuary enjoys God's blessing and has been chosen by Him as His sanctuary. Even though it is located in the middle of wide expanses of desert God has seen to it that its inhabitants enjoy a satisfactory living. Although the rest of Arabia was plunged into chaos and disorder for about two and a half thousand years, peace and tranquility reigned in both the precincts and the environs of the Kabah. Thanks to the Kabah the entire Arabian peninsula enjoyed four months of peace and order every year. These were the sacred months when people went on Pilgrimage. Moreover, barely a half century before the revelation of these verses, people had seen how Abraha, the Abyssinian invader, fell prey to God's scourge when he attacked Makka with the intention of destroying the Kabah. At that time, this incident was known to everybody in Arabia. Its memory was fresh and many eye-witnesses were still alive at the time of the Prophet (peace be on him).

(81) Even during the pre-Islamic era - the Age of Ignorance in Arabia - this sanctuary enjoyed such veneration that even those who thirsted for each other's blood saw their enemies in the sacred territory but dare not attack them.

قُلۡ يٰۤاَهۡلَ الۡكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَكۡفُرُوۡنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَاللّٰهُ شَهِيۡدٌ عَلٰى مَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ۹۸

(3-98) Say: 'People of the Book! Why do you reject the signs of Allah when Allah is witness to all that you do?'

قُلْ يٰۤاَ لَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَصُدُّوْ نَ عَ سَبِيلِ اللّٰ مَنْ اٰمَنَ تَبْغُوْنَهَا عِوَجًا وَّ اَنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءُ ؕ وَمَا اللّٰ بِغٰفِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾

(3-99) Say: 'People of the Book! Why do you hinder one who believes from the way of Allah, seeking that he follow a crooked way, even though you yourselves are witness to its being the right way?' Allah is not heedless of what you do.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِنْ تُطِيْعُوْا فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ يَرُدُّوْكُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

(3-100) Believers! Were you to obey a party of those who were given the Book, they might cause you to renounce the Truth after you have attained to faith.

وَ كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ وَ اَنْتُمْ تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ وَ فِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلُهٗ ؕ وَ مَنْ يَّعْتَصِمْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

(3-101) How can you disbelieve when you are the ones to whom the signs of Allah are recited and amidst you is His Messenger? Whoever holds fast to Allah will certainly be guided to the straight way.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

(3-102) Believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and see that you do not die save in the state of submission to Allah. (82)

(82) They should remain steadfast in their obedience and loyalty to God.

وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَآءً فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖۤ اِخْوَانًا ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

(3-103) Hold fast together to the cable of Allah [83] and be not divided. Remember the blessing that Allah bestowed upon you: you were once enemies then He brought your hearts together, so that through His blessing you became brothers. You stood on the brink of a pit of fire and He delivered you from it. [84] Thus Allah makes His signs clear to you that you may be guided to the right way. [85]

(83) The expression 'cable of Allah', in this verse, refers to the 'religion of God'. The reason for use of the word 'cable' (habl) is that it both establishes a bond between man and God and joins all believers together. To take a firm hold on this cable means that the believers should attach profound importance to their religion: this should always be the centre of their concerns; they should continually strive to establish it; and the common desire to serve it should make them co-operate with each other.

As soon as Muslims turn their attentions away from the fundamental teachings of their religion and lose sight of establishing its hegemony in life they begin to concern themselves with matters of secondary importance. And, just as they rent the communities of the former Prophets, enticing people away from their true objective in life, so schisms and dissensions are bound to plague their lives. If Muslims do this they are bound to suffer indignity and disgrace both in this world and the Next as happened with the followers of the previous Prophets.

(84) This refers to the state of the Arabs on the eve of the advent of Islam. There were animosities among the tribes which regularly broke out into fighting; every now and then there was much bloodshed. Things had reached a point that the entire Arabian nation seemed to be on the verge of destroying itself. It was due to the blessings of Islam alone that it was saved from being consumed by the fire to which this verse alludes. The people of Madina had embraced Islam some three or four years before these verses were revealed. They had witnessed the blessing of Islam as it unified into one brotherhood the Aws and Khazraj, two tribes which had long been sworn enemies.

Moreover, both tribes treated the migrants from Makka in a spirit of sacrifice and love seldom seen even among members of the same family.

(85) If they had eyes to see they could conclude for themselves whether their salvation lay in adhering firmly to this religion or in abandoning it and reverting to their former state; i.e. decide whether their true well-wishers were God and His Messenger or those Jews, polytheists and hypocrites who strove to plunge them back into their former state.

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ اُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ١٠٤

(3-104) And from among you there must be a party who invite people to all that is good and enjoin the doing of all that is right and forbid the doing of all that is wrong. It is they who will attain true success.

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ تَفَرَّقُوْا وَاخْتَلَفُوْا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ١٠٥

(3-105) Do not be like those who fell into factions and differed among themselves [86] after clear signs had come to them. A mighty chastisement awaits them.

(86) The reference is to those communities which received clear and straightforward teachings of the true religion but who had abandoned the fundamentals, forming separate sects around trivial and subsidiary questions; they became so engrossed in quarrelling over superfluous and insignificant questions that they lost sight of the mission God had entrusted to them, and even lost interest in those fundamentals of belief and righteous conduct which are essential for man's salvation and felicity.

يَّوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوْهٌ وَّتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوْهٌ ۚ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ ۚ اَكَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ١٠٦

(3-106) On the Day when some faces will turn bright and their faces will turn dark. Those whose faces have turned dark will be told: 'Did you fall into unbelief after you had been blessed with belief? Taste, then, chastisement for your unbelief.

وَ اَمَّا الَّذِیۡنَ ابۡیَضَّتۡ وُجُوۡہُہُمۡ فَفِیۡ رَحۡمَۃِ اللّٰہِ ؕ ہُمۡ فِیۡہَا خٰلِدُوۡنَ ﴿۱۰۷﴾

(3-107) And those whose faces have turned bright, they will be in the mercy of Allah, and therein they shall abide.

تِلۡکَ اٰیٰتُ اللّٰہِ نَتۡلُوۡہَا عَلَیۡکَ بِالۡحَقِّ ؕ وَ مَا اللّٰہُ یُرِیۡدُ ظُلۡمًا لِّلۡعٰلَمِیۡنَ ﴿۱۰۸﴾

(3-108) These are the messages of Allah which We recite to you in truth, and Allah desires no wrong (87) to the people of the world.

(87) Since God does not want to subject people to any wrong He illuminates the straight path of their salvation, and forewarns them of the matters for which they will be asked to render an account in the Hereafter. It is clear that if people abandon the path of rectitude they wrong no one but themselves.

وَ لِلّٰہِ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِی الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ وَ اِلَی اللّٰہِ تُرۡجَعُ الۡاُمُوۡرُ ﴿۱۰۹﴾٪

(3-109) To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth, and to Allah are all matters referred for decision.

کُنۡتُمۡ خَیۡرَ اُمَّۃٍ اُخۡرِجَتۡ لِلنَّاسِ تَاۡمُرُوۡنَ بِالۡمَعۡرُوۡفِ وَ تَنۡہَوۡنَ عَنِ الۡمُنۡکَرِ وَ تُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِاللّٰہِ ؕ وَ لَوۡ اٰمَنَ اَہۡلُ الۡکِتٰبِ لَکَانَ خَیۡرًا لَّہُمۡ ؕ مِنۡہُمُ الۡمُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ وَ اَکۡثَرُہُمُ الۡفٰسِقُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱۰﴾

(3-110) You are now the best people brought forth for (the guidance and reform of) mankind. (88) You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. Had the People of the Book (89) believed it were better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are transgressors.

(88) This is the same declaration that was made earlier (see verse 2: 143 above). The Arabian Prophet (peace be on him) and his followers are informed that they are being assigned the guidance and leadership of the world, a position the Israelites had been relieved of because they had shown themselves unsuitable. The Muslims were charged with this responsibility because of their competence. They were the best people in terms of character and morals and had developed in theory and in practice the qualities essential for truly righteous leadership, namely the spirit and practical commitment to promoting good and suppressing evil and the acknowledgement of the One True God as their Lord and Master. In view of the task entrusted to them, they had to become conscious of their responsibilities and avoid the mistakes committed by their predecessors see (Surah 1, nn. 123 and 144 above).

(89) 'People of the Book' refers here to the Children of Israel.

لَن يَّضُرُّوكُمْ اِلَّآ اَذًى ۚ وَاِن يُّقٰتِلُوكُمْ يُوَلُّوكُمُ الْاَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُوْنَ ١١١

(3-111) They will not be able to harm you except for a little hurt, and if they fight against you they will turn their backs (in flight), and then they will not be succored.

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ اَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوْٓا اِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَآءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۚ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ الْاَنۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۚ ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ١١٢ ★

(3-112) Wherever they were, they were covered with ignominy, except when they were protected by either a covenant with Allah or a covenant with men. (90) They are laden with the burden of Allah's wrath, and humiliation is stuck upon them - and all this because they rejected the signs of Allah and slayed the Prophets without right, and because they disobeyed and transgressed.

(90) If the Jews have ever enjoyed any measure of peace and security anywhere in the world they owe it to the goodwill and benevolence of others rather than to their own power and strength. At times Muslim governments granted them refuge while at others non-Muslim powers extended protection. Similarly, if the Jews ever emerged as a power it was due not to their intrinsic strength but to the strength of others.

لَيۡسُوۡا سَوَآءً ؕ مِنۡ اَهۡلِ الۡكِتٰبِ اُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَّتۡلُوۡنَ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ اٰنَآءَ الَّيۡلِ وَهُمۡ يَسۡجُدُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱۳﴾

(3-113) Yet all are not alike: among the People of the Book there are upright people who recite the messages of Allah in the watches of the night and prostrate themselves in worship.

يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالۡيَوۡمِ الۡاٰخِرِ وَيَاۡمُرُوۡنَ بِالۡمَعۡرُوۡفِ وَيَنۡهَوۡنَ عَنِ الۡمُنۡكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُوۡنَ فِى الۡخَيۡرٰتِ ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيۡنَ ﴿۱۱۴﴾

(3-114) They believe in Allah and in the Last Day and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and hasten to excel each other in doing good. These are among the righteous.

وَمَا يَفۡعَلُوۡا مِنۡ خَيۡرٍ فَلَنۡ يُّكۡفَرُوۡهُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيۡمٌۢ بِالۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۱۵﴾

(3-115) Whatever good they do shall not go unappreciated, and Allah fully knows those who are pious.

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا لَنۡ تُغۡنِىَ عَنۡهُمۡ اَمۡوَالُهُمۡ وَلَاۤ اَوۡلَادُهُمۡ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيۡـًٔا ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصۡحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمۡ فِيۡهَا خٰلِدُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱۶﴾

(3-116) As for those who denied the Truth, neither their possessions nor their children will avail them against Allah. They are the people of the Fire, and therein they shall abide.

مَثَلُ مَا يُنۡفِقُوۡنَ فِىۡ هٰذِهِ الۡحَيٰوةِ الدُّنۡيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيۡحٍ فِيۡهَا صِرٌّ اَصَابَتۡ حَرۡثَ قَوۡمٍ ظَلَمُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ فَاَهۡلَكَتۡهُ ؕ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنۡ اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ يَظۡلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱۷﴾

(3-117) The example of what they spend in the life of this world is like that of a wind accompanied with frost which smites the harvest of a people who wronged themselves, and lays it to waste [91]It is not Allah who wronged them; rather it is they who wrong themselves.

(91) The term 'harvest' in this parable refers to this life which resembles a field of cultivation the harvest of which one will reap in the World to Come. The 'wind' refers to the superficial appearance of righteousness, for the sake of which unbelievers spend their wealth on philanthropic and charitable causes. The expression 'frost' indicates their lack of true faith and their failure to follow the Divine Laws, as a result of which their entire life has gone astray.

By means of this parable God seeks to bring home to them that while wind is useful for the growth of cultivation if that wind turns into frost it destroys it. So it is with man's acts of charity: they can prove helpful to the growth of the harvest one will reap in the Hereafter but are liable to be destructive if mixed with unbelief. God is the Lord and Master of man as well as of all that man owns, and the world in which he lives. If a man either does not recognize the sovereignty of his Lord and unlawfully serves others or disobeys God's Laws then his actions become crimes for which he deserves to be tried; his acts of 'charity' are but the acts of a servant who unlawfully helps himself to his master's treasure and then spends it as he likes.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُوْنِكُمْ لَا يَاْلُوْنَكُمْ خَبَالًا ۭ وَدُّوْا مَا عَنِتُّمْ ۚ قَدْ بَدَتِ
الْبَغْضَاۗءُ مِنْ اَفْوَاهِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا تُخْفِيْ صُدُوْرُهُمْ اَكْبَرُ ۭ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝١١٨

(3-118) Believers! Do not take for intimate friends those who are not of your kind. They spare no effort to injure you. [92] Indeed they love all that distresses you. Their hatred is clearly manifest in what they say, and what their breasts conceal is even

greater. Now We have made Our messages clear to you, if only you can understand (the danger of their intimacy).

(92) The Jews living on the outskirts of Madinah had long enjoyed friendly relations with the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj. In the first place this was the result of relations between individuals. Later, they were bound by ties of neighborliness and allegiance as a result of tribal inter-relationship. Even after the people of Aws and Khazraj embraced Islam, they maintained their old ties with the Jews and continued to treat them with the same warmth and cordiality. However, the hostility of the Jews towards the Arabian Prophet (peace be on him) and towards his mission was far too intense to allow them to maintain a cordial relationship with anyone who had joined the new movement. Outwardly, the Jews maintained the same terms of friendship with the Ansar (Helpers) as before but at heart they had become their sworn enemies. They made the best use of this pretended friendship, and remained constantly on the look-out for opportunities to create schisms and dissensions in the Muslim body-politic, and to draw out the secrets of the Muslims and pass them on to their enemies. Here God warns the Muslims to note this hypocrisy and take the necessary precaution.

هٰۤاَنْتُمْ اُولَآءِ تُحِبُّوْنَهُمْ وَ لَا يُحِبُّوْنَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْكِتٰبِ كُلِّهٖ ۚ وَ اِذَا لَقُوْكُمْ قَالُوْۤا اٰمَنَّا ۖۚ وَ اِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوْا عَلَيْكُمُ الْاَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ؕ قُلْ مُوْتُوْا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿۱۱۹﴾

(3-119) Lo! It is you who love them but they do not love you even though you believe in the whole of the (heavenly) Book. (93) When they meet you they say: 'We believe', but when they are by themselves they bite their fingers in rage at you. Say: 'Perish in your rage.' Allah knows even what lies hidden in their breasts.

(93) It is strange that although the Muslims had reason to feel aggrieved by the Jews it was the latter who felt aggrieved by the Muslims. Since the Muslims believed in the Torah along with the Qur'an the Jews had no justifiable ground for complaint. If anyone

had cause to complain it was the Muslims for the Jews did not believe in the Quran.

اِنْ تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ ۫ وَاِنْ تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَّفْرَحُوْا بِهَا ؕ وَاِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ۱۲۰ ٪

(3-120) If anything good happens to you they are grieved; if any misfortune befalls you they rejoice at it. But if you remain steadfast and mindful of Allah their designs will not cause you harm. Allah surely encompasses all that they do.

وَاِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ اَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ۱۲۱

(3-121) (O Messenger! (94) Remind the Muslims of the occasion) when you went forth from your home at early dawn (to the battlefield of Uhud) and placed the believers in battle arrays. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(94) This marks the beginning of the fourth discourse of this surah. It was revealed after the Battle of Uhud and contains comments on it. The previous section ended with the assurance: 'But if you remain steadfast and mindful of Allah their designs will not cause you harm.' (See Verse 120 above.) The Muslims did suffer a setback in the Battle of Uhud precisely because of this lack of patience, and because of a few mistakes committed by some of them which were indicative of insufficient piety. This discourse, therefore, is quite appropriate and warns the Muslims against such weaknesses.

The discourse contains a precise and instructive commentary on all the main events connected with the Battle of Uhud. In order to appreciate this it is appropriate to refresh our minds as to the situational context of its revelations. In the beginning of Shawwal 3 A.H., the Quraysh attacked Madinah with an army of three thousand men. In addition to their numerical superiority they were also much better equipped. Moreover, they

sought to avenge their losses in the Battle of Badr. The Prophet (peace be on him) and his closest Companions were of the opinion that they should defend themselves from within the boundaries of Madinah, There were, however, several young people who longed for martyrdom and felt aggrieved at, not having had the opportunity to fight in the Battle of Badr. They insisted that the enemy should be resisted outside the confines of Madinah. The Prophet gave in to their demands and decided to march out of the city to meet their enemies. A thousand people accompanied him. Of these, 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy broke away along with his three hundred followers after reaching the place called Shawt. This, happening as it did just before the commencement of the battle, created such perplexity and confusion that the people of Banu Salamah and Banu Harithah wanted to turn back, and it took some effort on the part of the Companions to persuade them not to.

The Prophet advanced with the remaining seven hundred Muslims and lined up his troops at the foot of Mount Uhud (a distance of approximately four miles from Madinah) in such a manner that the mountain was behind and the Quraysh army in front of them. There was only one mountain pass from where the Muslims could be subjected to a surprise attack. The Prophet posted fifty archers there as guards under the- command of 'Abd Allah b. Jubayr, instructing him neither to let anyone approach nor to move away from that spot. 'Even if you see birds fly off with our flesh', the Prophet said, 'still you must not move away from this place'. (For such instructions from the Prophet see Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, vol. 2, pp. 39-40 and 47, and Waqidi, Maghazi, vol. 1, pp. 224 and 229 - Ed.) Then the battle commenced. In the beginning the Muslims proved the better side but instead of maintaining their onslaught until they had assured complete victory, they were overcome by the temptation of booty and turned to collecting the spoils. When the archers whom the Prophet had posted to repel the attack of the enemy from the rear saw that the enemy had taken to its heels and that people were collecting booty, they too joined the melee and began to do the same.

'Abd Allah b. Jubayr tried to persuade them not to leave their posts by reminding them of the Prophet's directive. Hardly anyone heeded him. Khalid b. Walld, who was at that time an unbeliever and who commanded the Quraysh cavalry, seized his opportunity. He rode with his men around Mount Uhud and attacked the flank of the Muslim army through the pass. 'Abd Allah b. Jubayr's depleted forces tried unsuccessfully to resist the attack.

The fleeing soldiers of the enemy also returned and joined the attack from the front and the scales of the battle turned against the Muslims. The suddenness of these attacks, from both the rear and the front, caused such confusion that many fled. Then the rumor spread that the- Prophet, himself, had been martyred. This news shattered whatever presence of mind the Companions had left, and led many who had stood firm to lose courage altogether. At this moment there remained around the injured and bleeding Prophet (peace be on him) no more than ten or twelve loyal persons who had staked their lives for his sake. Defeat seemed inevitable. Fortunately, however, the Companions realized that the Prophet was still alive. They therefore advanced towards him from all sides, rallied around him, and led him to the safety of the mountain. (For an account of the Battle of Uhud in early Islamic sources, see Ibn Hisham, Slrah, yol, 1, pp. 61 ff., Waqidi, Maghazi, vol. 1, pp. 199 ff., especially pp. 224, 229 f. and 237 ff., and Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, vol. 2, pp. 36-48, etc. - Ed.)

It remains a mystery why the unbelievers of Makka held back when victory was within their grasp. The Muslim ranks were in such disarray that they would have been hard pushed to resist further. (Cf. the account and conclusion of W. M. Watt regarding the Battle of Uhud in Muhammad at Medina, Oxford University Press, 1956, pp. 21 ff., especially pp. 26-9 -Ed.)

اِذْ ۞ هَمَّ طَّآئِفَتَانِ مِنكُمْ اَن تَفْشَلَا وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

(3-122) And recall when two groups from among you were inclined to flag [95] although Allah was their protector; it is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.

(95) This refers to Banu Salamah and Banu Harithah, whose morale had been undermined as a result of the withdrawal of 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy and his followers.

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَّاَنْتُمْ اَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

(3-123) For sure Allah helped you at Badr when you were utterly weak. Beware, then, of Allah; perhaps you will be thankful.

اِذْ تَقُوْلُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَلَنْ يَّكْفِيَكُمْ اَنْ يُّمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلٰثَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُنْزَلِيْنَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

(3-124) And recall when you said to the believers: 'Will it not suffice you that your Lord will aid you by sending down three thousand angels? [96]

(96) When the Muslims saw that their enemies numbered three thousand while three hundred out of their army of one thousand had departed they began to lose heart. It was on this occasion that the Prophet spoke these words to them.

بَلٰٓى ۙ اِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا وَيَاْتُوْكُمْ مِّنْ فَوْرِهِمْ هٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِيْنَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

(3-125) If you are steadfast and mindful of God, even though the enemy should suddenly fall upon you, your Lord will help you even with five thousand marked angels.

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بُشْرٰى لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوْبُكُمْ بِهٖ ۚ وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ﴿١٢٦﴾

(3-126) Allah has reminded you of this only as a glad tiding to you and so as to let your hearts be at rest. Help can only come from Allah, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِ يۡنَ كَفَرُوۡۤا اَوۡ يَكۡبِتَهُمۡ فَيَنۡقَلِبُوۡا خَآئِبِيۡنَ ﴿۱۲۷﴾

(3-127) And Allah provided this aid to you in order to cut off a part of those who disbelieved and frustrate them so that they retreat in utter disappointment.

لَيۡسَ لَكَ مِنَ الۡاَمۡرِ شَىۡءٌ اَوۡ يَتُوۡبَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ اَوۡ يُعَذِّبَهُمۡ فَاِنَّهُمۡ ظٰلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۸﴾

(3-128) (O Messenger!) It is not for you to decide whether He will accept their repentance or chastise them, for they surely are wrongdoers.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ يَغۡفِرُ لِمَنۡ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِيۡمٌ ﴿۱۲۹﴾

(3-129) Whatever is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah. He forgives whom He wills, and chastises whom He wills: Allah is indeed All-Forgiving, Most-Compassionate. (97)

(97) When the Prophet was injured he uttered words of imprecation against the unbelievers: 'How can a people that injures its own Prophet attain salvation?' These verses are in response to that utterance.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا لَا تَاۡكُلُوا الرِّبٰۤوا اَضۡعَافًا مُّضٰعَفَةً ۪ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُوۡنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾

(3-130) Believers! Do not swallow interest, doubled and redoubled, and be mindful of Allah so that you may attain true success. (98)

(98) The major cause of the setback suffered at Uhud was that precisely at the moment of their victory the Muslims succumbed to the desire for worldly possessions, and turned to collecting booty rather than completing their task of crushing the enemy. Hence God thought fit to raise a barrier against this excessive adoration of money, and to urge them to give up usury which keeps man constantly absorbed in considering ways and means of amassing wealth and generally whets his appetite for money.

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِىۡۤ اُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾

(3-131) And have fear of the Fire which awaits those who deny the Truth.

وَ اَطِيۡعُوا اللّٰہَ وَ الرَّسُوۡلَ لَعَلَّکُمۡ تُرۡحَمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۳۲﴾

(3-132) And obey Allah and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy.

وَسَارِعُوۡۤا اِلٰی مَغۡفِرَۃٍ مِّنۡ رَّبِّکُمۡ وَجَنَّۃٍ عَرۡضُہَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَ الۡاَرۡضُ ۙ اُعِدَّتۡ لِلۡمُتَّقِیۡنَ ﴿۱۳۳﴾

(3-133) And hasten to the forgiveness of your Lord and to a Paradise as vast as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the God-fearing.

الَّذِیۡنَ یُنۡفِقُوۡنَ فِی السَّرَّآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ وَالۡکٰظِمِیۡنَ الۡغَیۡظَ وَالۡعَافِیۡنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ؕ وَاللّٰہُ یُحِبُّ الۡمُحۡسِنِیۡنَ ﴿۱۳۴﴾

(3-134) who spend in the way of Allah both in plenty and hardship, who restrain their anger, and forgive others. Allah loves such good-doers." (99)

(99) The existence of interest in a society generates two kinds of moral disease. It breeds greed and avarice, meanness and selfishness among those who receive interest. At the same time, those who have to pay interest develop strong feelings of hatred, resentment, spite and jealousy. God intimates to the believers that the attributes bred by the spread of interest are the exact opposite of those which develop as a result of spending in the way of God, and that it is through the latter rather than the former that man can achieve God's forgiveness and Paradise. (For further explanation see (Surah 2, n. 320 above.)

وَالَّذِیۡنَ اِذَا فَعَلُوۡا فَاحِشَۃً اَوۡ ظَلَمُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَہُمۡ ذَکَرُوا اللّٰہَ فَاسۡتَغۡفَرُوۡا لِذُنُوۡبِہِمۡ ۟ وَمَنۡ یَّغۡفِرُ الذُّنُوۡبَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ ۟ وَلَمۡ یُصِرُّوۡا عَلٰی مَا فَعَلُوۡا وَہُمۡ یَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۳۵﴾

(3-135) These are the ones who, when they commit any indecency and wrong against themselves, instantly remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins - for who will forgive sins save Allah? - and who do not willfully persist in the wrong they did.

أُولٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَٰمِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

(3-136) They shall be recompensed by forgiveness from their Lord and by gardens beneath which rivers flow; there they shall abide. How good is the reward of those who labor!

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

(3-137) Many eras have passed before you. Go about, then, in the land and behold the end of those who gave the lie to (the directives and ordinances of Allah).

هَٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

(3-138) This is a plain exposition for men, and a guidance and admonition for the Godfearing.

وَلَا تَ ۡنُ ۡ ا وَلَا تَحۡزَنُ ۡ ا وَاَنۡتُمُ الۡاَعۡلَوۡنَ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ مُّؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ١٣٩

(3-139) Do not, then, either lose heart or grieve: for you shall surely gain the upper hand if you are true men of faith.

اِنۡ يَّمۡسَسۡكُمۡ قَرۡحٌ فَقَدۡ مَسَّ الۡقَوۡمَ قَرۡحٌ مِّثۡلُهٗ ؕ وَتِلۡكَ الۡاَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيۡنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعۡلَمَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُ ۡ ا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنۡكُمۡ شُهَدَآءَ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ١٤٠

(3-140) If a wound has befallen you a similar wound has already befallen the people who are opposed to you. (100) We make such movements to men in turn so that Allah might mark out those who are the true men of faith and select from among you those who do really bear witness (to the Truth): (101) for Allah does not love the wrong-doers,

(100) This alludes to the Battle of Badr. The intention is to point out to the Muslims that if the unbelievers were not demoralized by the setback they suffered at Badr then the Muslims should not be disheartened by the setback they suffered in the Battle of Uhud.

(101) The actual words of this verse, can be interpreted in two ways. One meaning could be that God wanted to select some of them so that He could bestow upon them the honour of martyrdom. The second meaning could be that out of the hotch-potch of true believers and hypocrites which their community consisted of at that moment, God wanted to sift those who were truly His witnesses over all mankind. See(Quran 2: 143 - Ed.)

وَ لِيُمَحِّصَ اللّٰ ُ الَّذِ نَ اٰمَنُ ا وَ يَمحَقَ الكٰفِرِنَ ١٤١

(3-141) and makes men go through trials in order that He might purge the believers and blot out those who deny the Truth.

اَ م حَسِ تُ ب ُ ط اَ نَّ خُلُوا الجَنَّ ةَ وَ لَمَّا يَعلَمِ اللّٰ ُ الَّذِ نَ جٰ دُ ا و ا مِ نكُ ُ وَ يَعلَمَ الصّٰبِرِنَ ١٤٢

(3-142) Did you think that you would enter Paradise even though Allah has not yet seen who among you strove hard in His way and remained steadfast?

وَ لَقَ دكُ نتُ ُ تَمَنَّ وْنَ ال مَ وتَ مِ ن قَ بلِ اَن تَلقَ وهُ فَقَ درَ اَ يتُ مُ وهُ وَ اَ نتُ ُ تَنظُرُونَ ١٤٣

(3-143) You previously longed for death (in the way of Allah): now you have faced it, observing it with your own eyes. (102)

(102) This is with reference to those Companions who had urged the Prophet to go out of Madinah and take on the enemy there because of their ardent desire for martyrdom. (See Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, vol. 2, p. 38 - Ed.)

وَ مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُ لٌ قَد خَلَت مِن قَ بلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ط اَفَ ائِن مَّاتَ اَو قُتِلَ انقَلَبتُ ُ عَلٰى اَعقَابِكُ ط وَمَن يَّنقَلِب عَلٰى عَقِبَي فَلَن يَّضُرَّ اللّٰ شَ ئًا ط وَ سَيَزِى اللّٰ الشّٰكِرِنَ ١٤٤

(3-144) Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and Messengers have passed away before him. If, then, he were to die or be slain will you turn about on your heels? (103) Whoever turns about on his heels can in no way harm Allah. As for the grateful ones, Allah will soon reward them.

(103) When the rumor of the Prophet's martyrdom spread during the battle, it disheartened most of the Companions. The hypocrites who were in the Muslim camp began to advise the believers to approach 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy so that he might secure

protection for them from Abu Sufyan. Some went so far as to say that had Muhammad really been the Messenger of God he would not have been put to death, and for that reason they counselled people to revert to their ancestral faith. It is in this context that the Muslims are now told that if their devotion to the truth is wholly bound up with the person of Muhammad (peace be on him), and if their submission to God is so lukewarm that his demise would cause them to plunge back into the disbelief they had cast off, then they should bear in mind the fact that Islam does not need them.

وَ مَا كَانَ لِنَفۡسٍ اَنۡ تَمُوۡتَ اِلَّا بِاِذۡنِ اللّٰهِ كِتٰبًا مُّؤَجَّلًا ؕ وَ مَنۡ يُّرِدۡ ثَوَابَ الدُّنۡيَا نُؤۡتِهٖ مِنۡهَا ۚ وَ مَنۡ يُّرِدۡ ثَوَابَ الۡاٰخِرَةِ نُؤۡتِهٖ مِنۡهَا ؕ وَ سَنَجۡزِى الشّٰكِرِيۡنَ ﴿۱۴۵﴾

(3-145) It is not given to any soul to die except with the leave of Allah, and at an appointed time. (104) And he who desires his reward in this world, We shall grant him the reward of this world; and he who desires the reward of the Other World, (105) We shall grant him the reward of the Other World. And soon shall We reward the ones who are grateful. (106)

(104) The purpose of this directive is to bring home to the Muslims that it would be futile for them to try to flee from death. No one can either die before or survive the moment determined for death by God. Hence one should not waste one's time thinking how to escape death. Instead, one should take stock of one's activities and see whether one's efforts have either been directed merely to one's well-being in this world or to well-being in the Hereafter.

(105) The word thawab denotes recompense and reward. The 'reward of this world' signifies the totality of benefits and advantages which a man receives as a consequence of his actions and efforts within the confines of this world. The 'reward of the Other World' denotes the benefits that a man will receive in the lasting World to Come as the fruits of his actions and efforts. From the Islamic point of view, the crucial question bearing upon

human morals is whether a man keeps his attention focused on the worldly results of his endeavors or on the results which will accrue to him in the Next World.

(106) The 'ones who are grateful' are those who fully appreciate God's favor in making the true religion available to them, and thereby intimating to them knowledge of a realm that is infinitely vaster than this world. Such people appreciate that God has graciously informed them of the truth so that the consequences of human endeavor are not confined to the brief span of earthly life but cover a vast expanse, embracing both the present life and the much more important life of the Hereafter.

A grateful man is he who, having gained this breadth of outlook and having developed this long-range perception of the ultimate consequences of things, persists in acts of righteousness out of his faith in God and his confidence in God's assurance that they will bear fruit in the Hereafter. He does so even though he may sometimes find that, far from bearing fruit, righteousness leads to privation and suffering in this world. The ungrateful ones are those who persist in a narrow preoccupation with earthly matters. They are those who disregard the evil consequences of unrighteousness in the Hereafter, seizing everything which appears to yield benefits and advantages in this world, and who are not prepared to devote their time and energy to those acts of goodness which promise to bear fruit in the Hereafter and which are either unlikely to yield earthly advantages or are fraught with risks. Such people are ungrateful and lack appreciation of the valuable knowledge vouchsafed to them by God.

وَ كَاَيِّنۡ مِّنۡ نَّبِیٍّ قٰتَلَ مَعَہٗ رِبِّیُّوۡنَ کَثِیۡرٌ فَمَا وَہَنُوۡا لِمَاۤ اَصَابَہُمۡ فِیۡ سَبِیۡلِ اللّٰہِ وَ مَا ضَعُفُوۡا وَ مَا اسۡتَکَانُوۡا ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ یُحِبُّ الصّٰبِرِیۡنَ ﴿۱۴۶﴾

(3-146) Many were the Prophets on whose side a large number of God-devoted men fought: they neither lost heart for all they had to suffer in the way of Allah nor did they weaken nor did they abase themselves. (107) Allah loves such steadfast ones.

(107) They did not surrender to the followers of falsehood merely because of their numerical inferiority and lack of resources.

وَ مَا كَانَ قَوۡلَہُمۡ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡ قَالُوۡا رَبَّنَا اغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوۡبَنَا وَ اِسۡرَافَنَا فِیۡۤ اَمۡرِنَا وَ ثَبِّتۡ اَقۡدَامَنَا وَ انۡصُرۡنَا عَلَی الۡقَوۡمِ الۡکٰفِرِیۡنَ ۱۴۷

(3-146) Many were the Prophets on whose side a large number of God-devoted men fought: they neither lost heart for all they had to suffer in the way of Allah nor did they weaken nor did they abase themselves. (107) Allah loves such steadfast ones.

(107) They did not surrender to the followers of falsehood merely because of their numerical inferiority and lack of resources.

فَاٰتٰىہُمُ اللّٰہُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنۡیَا وَ حُسۡنَ ثَوَابِ الۡاٰخِرَۃِ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ یُحِبُّ الۡمُحۡسِنِیۡنَ ۱۴۸

(3-147) And all they said was this: 'Our Lord! Forgive us our sins, and our excesses, and set our feet firm, and succor us against those who deny the Truth.'

فَاٰتٰىہُمُ اللّٰہُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنۡیَا وَحُسۡنَ ثَوَابِ الۡاٰخِرَۃِ ؕ وَاللّٰہُ یُحِبُّ الۡمُحۡسِنِیۡنَ ۱۴۸

(3-148) Thereupon Allah granted them the reward of this world as well as a better reward of the World to Come. Allah loves those who do good.

یٰۤاَیُّہَا الَّذِیۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اِنۡ تُطِیۡعُوا الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا یَرُدُّوۡکُمۡ عَلٰۤی اَعۡقَابِکُمۡ فَتَنۡقَلِبُوۡا خٰسِرِیۡنَ ۱۴۹

(3-149) Believers! If you follow those who deny the Truth, they will drive you back on your heels, (108) and you will turn about, losers.

(108) That is, they would push them back into the same state of unbelief from which they had extricated themselves. Since the Battle of Uhud the hypocrites and the Jews had constantly propagated the idea that, had Muhammad been a true Prophet, he would not have suffered the reverse that he encountered in that battle. This reverse was offered as proof that Muhammad (peace be on him) was an ordinary person whose fortunes varied, like those of other men, between victory and defeat. They further contended that the support and patronage of God which Muhammad claimed to enjoy was a sham.

بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوۡلٰىكُمۡ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ النّٰصِرِيۡنَ ﴿۱۵۰﴾

(3-150) But Allah is your Protector, and He is the best of helpers.

سَنُلۡقِىۡ فِىۡ قُلُوۡبِ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعۡبَ بِمَاۤ اَشۡرَكُوۡا بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمۡ يُنَزِّلۡ بِهٖ سُلۡطٰنًا ۚ وَمَاۡوٰىهُمُ النَّارُ ؕ وَبِئۡسَ مَثۡوَى الظّٰلِمِيۡنَ ﴿۱۵۱﴾

(3-151) We will cast terror into the hearts of those who have denied the Truth since they have associated others with Allah in His divinity - something for which He has sent down no sanction. The Fire is their abode; how bad the resting place of the wrong-doers will be!

وَلَقَدۡ صَدَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَعۡدَهٗۤ اِذۡ تَحُسُّوۡنَهُمۡ بِاِذۡنِهٖ ۚ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا فَشِلۡتُمۡ وَتَنَازَعۡتُمۡ فِى الۡاَمۡرِ وَعَصَيۡتُمۡ مِّنۡۢ بَعۡدِ مَاۤ اَرٰىكُمۡ مَّا تُحِبُّوۡنَ ؕ مِنۡكُمۡ مَّنۡ يُّرِيۡدُ الدُّنۡيَا وَمِنۡكُمۡ مَّنۡ يُّرِيۡدُ الۡاٰخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمۡ عَنۡهُمۡ لِيَبۡتَلِيَكُمۡ ۚ وَلَقَدۡ عَفَا عَنۡكُمۡ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ ذُوۡ فَضۡلٍ عَلَى الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ﴿۱۵۲﴾

(3-152) Allah surely fulfilled His promise (of succor) when you were slaying them by His leave until the moment when you flagged and quarreled among yourselves about the matter, and acted against the order of (the Prophet). Soon He showed you what you had intensely desired - for some among you sought this world and some of you sought the Next. Thereupon, in order to put you to a test He turned you away from your foes. Still He

pardoned you after that (109) for Allah is Bounteous to those who believe.

(109) The failure of the Muslims was of such a serious nature that had God not pardoned them they might have been obliterated there and then. It was out of God's grace, support and patronage that after the Muslims had been overpowered by the enemy the latter were seized with perplexity and confusion, and withdrew.

إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِيٓ أُخْرَىٰكُمْ فَأَثَابَكُمْ غَمًّا بِغَمٍّ لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَآ أَصَابَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ١٥٣

(3-153) Recall when you were fleeing without casting even a side glance at anyone, and the Messenger was calling out to you from the rear. (110) Then Allah requited you by inflicting grief after grief upon you (111) so as to instruct you neither to grieve for the losses you might suffer nor for the afflictions that might befall you. Allah knows all that you do.

(110) When subjected to a sudden two-pronged attack the Muslims scattered; some fled to Madinah while others climbed Mount Uhud. Despite this, the Prophet (peace be on him) did not move from his position. The enemy surrounded him on all sides and only a small party of ten to twelve followers was left with him. Even at that critical moment his feet remained firm and he continued to summon his fleeing followers towards himself. (See Waqidi, Maghazi, vol. 1, pp. 237, 240 and 241 - Ed.)

(111) The 'grief referred to in this verse had many causes: (i) by the setback the Muslims suffered on the battlefield and by the rumor that the Prophet (peace be on him) had been martyred; (ii) by the fact that a large number of believers had been killed and wounded; and (iii) by the fact that nothing was known about what was happening to the Muslim families left behind in Madinah. For it was possible that the enemy was greater in numbers than the

total population of Madinah, and that it might break through the defenses of the battered

ثُمَّ اَنۡزَلَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ مِّنۡۢ بَعۡدِ الۡغَمِّ اَمَنَةً نُّعَاسًا يَّغۡشٰى طَآئِفَةً مِّنۡكُمۡ وَ طَآئِفَةٌ قَدۡ اَهَمَّتۡهُمۡ اَنۡفُسُهُمۡ يَظُنُّوۡنَ بِاللّٰهِ غَيۡرَ الۡحَقِّ ظَنَّ الۡجَاهِلِيَّةِ ؕ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ هَلۡ لَّنَا مِنَ الۡاَمۡرِ مِنۡ شَىۡءٍ ؕ قُلۡ اِنَّ الۡاَمۡرَ كُلَّهٗ لِلّٰهِ ؕ يُخۡفُوۡنَ فِىۡۤ اَنۡفُسِهِمۡ مَّا لَا يُبۡدُوۡنَ لَكَ ؕ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ لَوۡ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الۡاَمۡرِ شَىۡءٌ مَّا قُتِلۡنَا هٰهُنَا ؕ قُلۡ لَّوۡ كُنۡتُمۡ فِىۡ بُيُوۡتِكُمۡ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِيۡنَ كُتِبَ عَلَيۡهِمُ الۡقَتۡلُ اِلٰى مَضَاجِعِهِمۡ ۚ وَ لِيَبۡتَلِىَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِىۡ صُدُوۡرِكُمۡ ۚ وَ لِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِىۡ قُلُوۡبِكُمۡ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيۡمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوۡرِ ﴿۱۵۴﴾

(3-154) Then, after inflicting this grief, He sent down an inner peace upon you - a sleep which overtook some of you. (112) Those who were concerned merely about themselves, entertaining false notions about Allah - the notions of the Age of Ignorance - asked: 'Have we any say in the matter?' Tell them: 'Truly, all power of decision rests solely with Allah.' Indeed, they conceal in their hearts what they would not reveal to you, saying: 'If we had any power of decision, we would not have been slain here.' Say: 'Even if you had been in your houses, those for whom slaying had been appointed would have gone forth to the places where they were to be slain.' And all this happened so that Allah might test your secret thoughts and purge your hearts of all impurities. Allah knows well what is in the breasts of men.

(112) A strange phenomenon was then experienced by certain Muslim soldiers. Abu Talhah, who took part in the battle, states that the Muslims were seized by such drowsiness that their swords were slipping from their hands. (For several Traditions stating this incident, including one related by Abu Talhah, see Waqidi, Maghazi, vol. 1, pp. 295-6 - Ed.)

اِنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ تَوَلَّوۡا مِنۡكُمۡ يَوۡمَ الۡتَقَى الۡجَمۡعٰنِ ۙ اِنَّمَا اسۡتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيۡطٰنُ بِبَعۡضِ مَا كَسَبُوۡا ۚ وَ لَقَدۡ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنۡهُمۡ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوۡرٌ حَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۱۵۵﴾

(3-155) Surely those of them who turned their backs on the day when the two armies met (at Uhud) did so because

Satan made them slip because of some of their lapses. But Allah has pardoned them; He is All-Forgiving, All-Forbearing.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَقَالُوْا لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ اِذَا ضَرَبُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ اَوْ كَانُوْا غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُوْا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوْا وَمَا قُتِلُوْا لِيَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ ذٰلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ١٥٦

(3-156) Believers, do not behave like those who disbelieved and say to their brothers (who meet some mishap) in the course of their journey for fighting: 'Had they remained with us, they would not have died nor been slain.' Allah makes such thoughts the cause of deep regrets in their hearts. (113) For in truth it is Allah alone who grants life and deals death. Allah sees all that you do.

(113) Such ideas had no solid ground. God's decree regarding the time of one's death cannot be deferred. Those who lack faith in God and think that everything is dependent on their own scheming and effort rather than on the overpowering Will of God become victims of perpetual remorse, since they never cease to reflect how a slightly different circumstance or slightly altered strategy could have led to an altogether different and wholesome result.

وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَوْ مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُوْنَ ١٥٧

(3-157) And were you to be slain or to die in the way of Allah, then surely Allah's forgiveness and mercy are better than all the goods they amass.

وَلَئِنْ مُّتُّمْ اَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَاِاَلَى اللّٰهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ١٥٨

(3-158) And were you to die or be slain, it is to Allah that you will all be mustered.

فَبِمَا رَحۡمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنۡتَ لَهُمۡ ۚ وَلَوۡ كُنۡتَ فَظًّا غَلِيۡظَ الۡقَلۡبِ لَانۡفَضُّوۡا مِنۡ حَوۡلِكَ ۖ فَاعۡفُ
عَنۡهُمۡ وَاسۡتَغۡفِرۡ لَهُمۡ وَشَاوِرۡهُمۡ فِى الۡاَمۡرِ ۚ فَاِذَا عَزَمۡتَ فَتَوَكَّلۡ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ
الۡمُتَوَكِّلِيۡنَ ۝١٥٩

(3-159) It was thanks to Allah's mercy that you were gentle to them. Had you been rough, hard-hearted, they would surely have scattered away from you. So pardon them, and pray for their forgiveness, and take counsel from them in matters of importance. And when you are resolved on a course of action place your trust in Allah; surely Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).

اِنۡ يَّنۡصُرۡكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمۡ ۚ وَاِنۡ يَّخۡذُلۡكُمۡ فَمَنۡ ذَا الَّذِىۡ يَنۡصُرُكُمۡ مِّنۡۢ بَعۡدِهٖ ؕ وَعَلَى
اللّٰهِ فَلۡيَتَوَكَّلِ الۡمُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ۝١٦٠

(3-160) If Allah helps you none shall prevail over you; if He forsakes you then who can help you? It is in Allah that the believers should put their trust.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِىٍّ اَنۡ يَّغُلَّ ؕ وَمَنۡ يَّغۡلُلۡ يَاۡتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوۡمَ الۡقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفّٰى كُلُّ نَفۡسٍ مَّا
كَسَبَتۡ وَهُمۡ لَا يُظۡلَمُوۡنَ ۝١٦١

(3-161) It is not for a Prophet to defraud; (114) and whoever defrauds shall bring with him the fruits of his fraud on the Day of Resurrection, when every human being shall be paid in full what he has earned, and shall not be wronged.

(114) When the archers, whom the Prophet had posted to defend the army against any attack from the rear, saw that the spoils of the enemy were being collected, they feared that the spoils might fall in their entirety to the lot of the soldiers who were then collecting them, and that they might, therefore, be deprived of their share. It was this idea which had impelled them to leave their posts. When the Prophet returned to Madina after the battle he asked them to explain the cause of their disobedience. When he had heard their unconvincing stories he told them: 'You thought that we would act dishonestly and would not deliver you your share.' (See Alusi. Ruh al-Ma'ani, commentary on this verse - Ed.) The verse

alludes to this here. The purpose is to impress upon them that the Messenger of God himself was the commander of their army and that all their affairs were in his hands alone. What made them feel that their interests were not secure even in the hands of God's Messenger? Did they think that a division of spoils under the direct supervision of the Prophet Would be made in any manner other than that dictated by absolute honesty, trustworthiness and justice?

اَفَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضۡوَانَ اللّٰهِ كَمَنۡۢ بَآءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ مَاۡوٰىهُ جَهَنَّمُ ؕ وَ بِئۡسَ الۡمَصِيۡرُ ﴿۱۶۲﴾

(3-162) Is he who follows the good pleasure of Allah like him who is laden with Allah's wrath and whose abode is Hell? How evil that is for a resting-place!

هُمۡ دَرَجٰتٌ عِنۡدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بَصِيۡرٌۢ بِمَا يَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۱۶۳﴾

(3-163) They vary greatly in rank in the sight of Allah, and Allah sees what they do.

لَقَدۡ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ اِذۡ بَعَثَ فِيۡهِمۡ رَسُوۡلًا مِّنۡ اَنۡفُسِهِمۡ يَتۡلُوۡا عَلَيۡهِمۡ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَ يُزَكِّيۡهِمۡ وَ يُعَلِّمُهُمُ الۡكِتٰبَ وَ الۡحِكۡمَةَ ۚ وَ اِنۡ كَانُوۡا مِنۡ قَبۡلُ لَفِىۡ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيۡنٍ ﴿۱۶۴﴾

(3-164) Surely Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He raised from among them a Messenger to recite to them His signs, and to purify them, and to teach them the Book and Wisdom. For before that they were in manifest error.

اَوَ لَمَّاۤ اَصَابَتۡكُمۡ مُّصِيۡبَةٌ قَدۡ اَصَبۡتُمۡ مِّثۡلَيۡهَا ۙ قُلۡتُمۡ اَنّٰى هٰذَا ؕ قُلۡ هُوَ مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اَنۡفُسِكُمۡ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ﴿۱۶۵﴾

(3-165) And how come when a calamity befell you, you began to ask: 'How has this come about?' (115) even though the enemy has suffered at your hands (in the Battle of Badr) double what you have suffered! (116) Say: This calamity has been brought about by yourselves. (117) Surely Allah is All-Powerful. (118)

(115) The more high ranking Companions were too well aware of reality to fall prey to any misunderstandings. The ordinary believers, however, had thought that as long as God's Messenger was in their midst and as long as they enjoyed God's support and help the unbeliever, could never triumph over them. Hence, when they suffered defeat at the Battle of Uhud, their expectations were shaken and they began to wonder why things had taken the course they had. They wondered why they had been defeated even though they had fought for the sake of God's true religion with God's support, and the Messenger of God was with them on the battlefield. Furthermore, they were worried that the defeat had been at the hands of those who were out to destroy God's true religion. These verses seek to allay this sense of anxiety and rid their minds of doubt and suspicion.

(116) In the Battle of Uhud seventy Muslims were martyred. In the Battle of Badr. seventy unbelievers were killed and seventy taken as captives.

(117) The calamity that had befallen them was the outcome of their own weaknesses and mistakes. They had not remained sufficiently patient, they had acted, in certain respects, in a manner inconsistent with the dictates of piety, they had disobeyed the command that had been given them, they were lured by material wealth and they disputed and quarreled among them-selves. After all this, was it still necessary to ask what caused the debacle?

(118) If God has the power to make them victorious He also has the power to bring about their defeat.

وَ مَ ا اَصَابَكُمۡ يَوۡمَ الۡتَقَى الۡجَمۡعٰنِ فَبِاِذۡنِ اللّٰهِ وَ لِيَعۡلَمَ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ۱۶۶

(3-166) What befell you on the day when the two hosts met was by the leave of Allah, and in order that He might mark out those who believe

وَ لِيَعۡلَمَ الَّذِيۡنَ نَافَقُوۡا ۚ وَ قِيۡلَ لَهُمۡ تَعَالَوۡا قَاتِلُوۡا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ اَوِ ادۡفَعُوۡا ؕ قَالُوۡا لَوۡ نَعۡلَمُ
قِتَالًا لَّا اتَّبَعۡنٰكُمۡ ؕ هُمۡ لِلۡكُفۡرِ يَوۡمَئِذٍ اَقۡرَبُ مِنۡهُمۡ لِلۡاِيۡمَانِ ۚ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ بِاَفۡوَاهِهِمۡ مَّا لَيۡسَ فِىۡ
قُلُوۡبِهِمۡ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ اَعۡلَمُ بِمَا يَكۡتُمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۶۷﴾

(3-167) and those who are hypocrites. And when these hypocrites were asked: 'Come and fight in the wayof Allah', or (at least) 'defend yourselves', they answered: 'If we but knew that there would be fighting, we would certainly have followed.(119) They were nearer then to infidelity than to faith. They utter from their mouths what is not in their hearts. Allah knows well what they conceal.

(119) When 'Abd Allah b. Ubayy decided to withdraw from the battlefield with his men several Muslims attempted to persuade him not to do so. Ibn Ubayy replied that he was sure that there would be no fighting that day, and he assured them that had he expected fighting to take place, he would have gone along with them.

اَلَّذِيۡنَ قَالُوۡا لِاِخۡوَانِهِمۡ وَ قَعَدُوۡا لَوۡ اَطَاعُوۡنَا مَا قُتِلُوۡا ؕ قُلۡ فَادۡرَءُوۡا عَنۡ اَنۡفُسِكُمُ الۡمَوۡتَ
اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ صٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۶۸﴾

(3-168) These are the ones who stayed away, saying about their brothers: 'Had they followed us, they would not have been slain.' Say: 'If you speak the truth then avert death when it comes to you.'

وَ لَا تَحۡسَبَنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ قُتِلُوۡا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ اَمۡوَاتًا ؕ بَلۡ اَحۡيَآءٌ عِنۡدَ رَبِّهِمۡ يُرۡزَقُوۡنَ ﴿۱۶۹﴾

(3-169) Think not of those slain in the way of Allah as dead. (120) Indeed they are living, and with their Lord they have their sustenance,

(120) For an explanation see (Surah 2. n. 155) above.

فَرِحِيْنَ بِمَآ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ بِالَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ اَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ١٧٠

(3-170) rejoicing in what Allah has bestowed upon them out of His bounty, (121) jubilant that neither fear nor grief shall come upon the believers left behind in the world who have not yet joined them.

(121) There is a Tradition from the Prophet that he who leaves the world after having lived righteously is greeted with a life so felicitous that he never wishes to return to the world. The only exception to this are martyrs who wish to be sent back to the world so that they may once again attain martyrdom and thereby enjoy that unique joy, bliss and ecstasy which one experiences at the time of laying down one's life for God. (Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, vol. lll, 103, 126, 153, 173, 251, 276, 278, 284, 289; Bukhari, 'Tafsir al-Qur'an', 6 and 21: Muslim, 'Al-Imarah', 108, 109. 121 - Ed.)

يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُضِيْعُ اَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ١٧١

(3-171) They rejoice at the favors and bounties of Allah, and at the awareness that Allah will not cause the reward of the believers to be lost.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوْلِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَآ اَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِيْنَ اَحْسَنُوْا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقَوْا اَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ١٧٢

(3-172) There were those who responded to the call of Allah and the Messenger (122) after injury had smitten them (123) - for all those who do good and fear Allah there is a mighty reward.

(122) When, after the Battle of Uhud, the Makkan polytheists had travelled several stages of their journey, they began to tell themselves what a mistake they had made in allowing the opportunity to crush the power of Muhammad to slip out of their

hands. At one place they halted and deliberated among themselves about launching a second attack on Madinah. They failed, however, to muster sufficient courage and carried on to Makka. The Prophet, for his part, also realized that they might attack once again. On the second day of Uhud, therefore, he gathered the Muslims and urged them to pursue the unbelievers. Even though this was a highly critical moment, the true men of faith girded their loins and were prepared to lay down their lives at the behest of the Prophet. They accompanied him to Hamra' al-Asad, eight miles from Madinah. The present verse refers to these dedicated men.

(123) These few verses were revealed almost one year after the Battle of Uhud. As they are connected with the events of the battle they were included in the present discourse.

اَلَّذِينَ قَالَ لَ ُ مُ النَّاسُ اِنَّ النَّاسَ قَ ۡ جَمَعُو ا لَكُمۡ فَاخۡشَوُهُم فَزَادَهُم اِ يمَانًا ۖ وَّ قَالُوا حَسۡبُنَا اللّٰهُ وَ نِ ۡ مَ ۡ وَكِيلُ ۡ ﴿۱۷۳﴾

(3-173) When people said to them: 'Behold, a host has gathered around you and you should fear them', it only increased their faith and they answered: 'Allah is Sufficient for us; and what an excellent Guardian He is!'

فَا نقَلَبُو ا بِنِعۡمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَفَ ۡ لٍ لَّمۡ يَمۡسَسۡهُم سُوٓ ءٌ وَّ اتَّبَعُو ا رِضۡوَانَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ ذُو فَ ۡ لٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿۱۷۴﴾

(3-174) So they returned with a mighty favor and a great bounty from Allah having suffered no harm. They followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the Lord of great bounty.

اِنَّمَا ذٰلِكُمُ الشَّيۡطٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ اَوۡلِيَآءَهٗ ۪ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُم وَ خَافُو نِ اِ ن كُنتُم مُّؤۡمِنِينَ ﴿۱۷۵﴾

(3-175) It was Satan who suggested to you the fear of his allies. Do not fear them; fear Me, if you truly believe. (124)

(124) While returning from the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan challenged the Muslims to another encounter at Badr the following year. But when the appointed time arrived, Abu Sufyan's courage failed him on account of the famine prevailing in Makka that year. As a face-saving device he arranged to send an agent to Madinah who spread the rumor that tremendous war preparations were afoot among the Quraysh, and that they were trying to muster a huge army which would be so powerful that no other power in the whole of Arabia would resist it. The purpose of this rumor was to overawe the Muslims and discourage them from advancing towards Makka, so that when the confrontation did not take place it would be blamed on the timidity of the Muslims. The effect of this measure was such that when the Prophet (peace be on him) urged the Muslims to accompany him to Badr the initial response was not encouraging. Finally, the Prophet publicly announced that if no one would accompany him, he would go alone. In response, fifteen hundred devotees expressed their willingness and accompanied him to Badr. Abu Sufyan set out with two thousand men but after travelling for two days he told his men that it seemed unwise to fight and that they would return the following year for the proposed encounter. Thus he and his men retreated. The Prophet and his Companions stayed at Badr for eight days awaiting the threatened encounter. Meanwhile, they conducted business with a trade caravan which yielded them considerable profit. Later, when it became known that the unbelievers had gone back to Makka, the Prophet returned to Madinah. (See Ibn Hisham, vol. 2, pp. 209 f.; Ibn Ishaq, Life of Muhammad, pp. 447 f. - Ed.)

وَ لَا یَحۡزُنۡکَ الَّذِیۡنَ یُسَارِعُوۡنَ فِی الۡکُفۡرِ ۚ اِنَّہُمۡ لَنۡ یَّضُرُّوا اللّٰہَ شَیۡئًا ؕ یُرِیۡدُ اللّٰہُ اَلَّا یَجۡعَلَ لَہُمۡ حَظًّا فِی الۡاٰخِرَۃِ ۚ وَ لَہُمۡ عَذَابٌ عَظِیۡمٌ ﴿۱۷۶﴾

(3-176) Let not those who run towards disbelief grieve you; they shall not hurt Allah in the least. Allah will not provide for them any share in the Next Life. A mighty punishment awaits them.

اِنَّ الَّذِیۡنَ اشۡتَرَوُا الۡکُفۡرَ بِالۡاِیۡمَانِ لَنۡ یَّضُرُّوا اللّٰہَ شَیۡئًا ۚ وَ لَہُمۡ عَذَابٌ اَلِیۡمٌ ﴿۱۷۷﴾

(3-177) Indeed those who have purchased unbelief in exchange for faith shall not hurt Allah in the least. Theirs shall be a painful chastisement.

وَ لَا يَحۡسَبَنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡۤا اَنَّمَا نُمۡلِىۡ لَهُمۡ خَيۡرٌ لِّاَنۡفُسِهِمۡ ؕ اِنَّمَا نُمۡلِىۡ لَهُمۡ لِيَزۡدَادُوۡۤا اِثۡمًا ۚ وَ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيۡنٌ ﴿۱۷۸﴾

(3-178) Do not let the, unbelievers imagine that the respite We give them is good for them. We give them respite so that they may grow in wickedness. A humiliating chastisement lies in store for them.

مَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيَذَرَ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ عَلٰى مَاۤ اَنۡتُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ حَتّٰى يَمِيۡزَ الۡخَبِيۡثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ؕ وَ مَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُطۡلِعَكُمۡ عَلَى الۡغَيۡبِ وَ لٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَجۡتَبِىۡ مِنۡ رُّسُلِهٖ مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ ۚ فَاٰمِنُوۡا بِاللّٰهِ وَ رُسُلِهٖ ۚ وَ اِنۡ تُؤۡمِنُوۡا وَ تَتَّقُوۡا فَلَكُمۡ اَجۡرٌ عَظِيۡمٌ ﴿۱۷۹﴾

(3-179) Allah will not let the believers stay in the state they are: (125) He will set the wicked apart from the good. Allah is not going to disclose to you what is hidden in the realm beyond the reach of perception,(126) but He chooses from among His Messengers whom He wills (to intimate such knowledge). Believe, then, in Allah and in His Messengers; and if you believe and become God-fearing, yours will be a great reward.

(125) That is, God does not want to see the Muslim community in a hotch-potch condition with the true men of faith indistinguishable from the hypocrites.

(126) This means that God does not resort to revelation to provide information as to whether specific individuals are true men of faith or hypocrites. God creates, instead, certain situations in which the faith of those who profess to believe is severely tested. The result is that the man of faith stands out clearly from the hypocrite.

وَ لَا يَحۡسَبَنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ يَبۡخَلُوۡنَ بِمَاۤ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنۡ فَضۡلِهٖ هُوَ خَيۡرًا لَّهُمۡ ؕ بَلۡ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمۡ ؕ سَيُطَوَّقُوۡنَ مَا بَخِلُوۡا بِهٖ يَوۡمَ الۡقِيٰمَةِ ؕ وَ لِلّٰهِ مِيۡرَاثُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ خَبِيۡرٌ ﴿۱۸۰﴾

(3-180) Those who are niggardly about what Allah has granted them out of His bounty think that niggardliness is good for them; it is bad for them. What they were niggardly about will turn into a halter round their necks on the Day of Resurrection. To Allah belongs the inheritance of the heavens and the earth; (127) and Allah is well aware of what you do.

(127) Everything in the heavens and the earth belongs to God alone. Hence the possession and use of anything by man is purely transient. For everyone will be dispossessed of his temporary belongings, and everything will ultimately return to and abide with God. If anyone therefore spends openheartedly in the way of God out of his temporary possessions he does so from property which, ultimately, belongs to God alone. Anyone who hoards his possessions and fails to spend them in the way of God is indeed stupid.

لَقَدۡ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوۡلَ الَّذِيۡنَ قَالُوۡۤا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ فَقِيۡرٌ وَّنَحۡنُ اَغۡنِيَآءُ ۘ سَنَكۡتُبُ مَا قَالُوۡا وَ قَتۡلَهُمُ الۡاَنۡۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيۡرِ حَقٍّ ۙ وَّ نَقُوۡلُ ذُوۡقُوۡا عَذَابَ الۡحَرِيۡقِ ﴿۱۸۱﴾

(3-181) Allah has heard the saying of those who said: 'Allah is poor, and we are rich. (128) We shall record what they have said, and the fact of their slaying the Prophets unjustly, and we shall say to them: Taste now the torment of the Fire.

(128) This statement was made by the Jews. On the revelation of the Qur'anic verse (2: 245): 'Who of you will lend Allah a goodly loan?', the Jews began to ridicule it and said: 'Look, God has now gone bankrupt and has begun to beg of His creatures for loans.' (For this statement made by the Jews see the Tradition mentioned by Ibn Kathir in his comments on this verse - Ed.)

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتۡ اَيۡدِيۡكُمۡ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيۡسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلۡعَبِيۡدِ ﴿۱۸۲﴾

(3-182) That is in recompense for what you have done.' Allah does no wrong to His servants.

اَلَّذِيۡنَ قَالُوۡۤا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَهِدَ اِلَيۡنَاۤ اَلَّا نُؤۡمِنَ لِرَسُوۡلٍ حَتّٰى يَاۡتِيَنَا بِقُرۡبَانٍ تَاۡكُلُهُ النَّارُ ؕ قُلۡ قَدۡ جَآءَكُمۡ رُسُلٌ مِّنۡ قَبۡلِىۡ بِالۡبَيِّنٰتِ وَ بِالَّذِىۡ قُلۡتُمۡ فَلِمَ قَتَلۡتُمُوۡهُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ صٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۸۳﴾

(3-183) To those who say: 'Allah has directed us that we accept none as Messenger until he makes an offering that the fire will consume', say: 'Other Messengers came to you before me with clear signs, and with the sign you have mentioned. So why did you slay them, if what you say is true? (129)

(129) The Bible mentions at several places that the token of Divine acceptance of a person's sacrificial offering was the appearance of a mysterious fire which consumed the offering. (See Judges 6: 20-1 and 13- 19-20; 2 Chronicles 7: 1-2.) The Bible does not state, however, that the consuming fire was an indispensable token of prophethood and that anyone not endowed with that miracle could not be a Prophet. The Jews in discussing the claim of Muhammad (peace be on him) to be a Messenger of God brought up the question of this miraculous sign, and used it as a pretext for denying that claim. There was even clearer evidence of the Jews' hostility to Truth: they had not hesitated to murder a number of Prophets who had been endowed with the miracle of consuming fire. The Bible mentions, for example, the Prophet Elijah who had challenged the worshippers of Ba'l to sacrifice a bull, promising that he too would sacrifice a bull. He stated that the offering of the one who was truthful would be consumed by the miraculous fire. The confrontation took place before a large crowd and it was Elijah's sacrifice which was consumed by the fire. This so antagonized the Ba'1-worshipping Queen that the henpecked King decided to put the Prophet Elijah to death. Elijah was forced to leave his homeland and take refuge in the mountains of Sinai. (See 1 Kings 18 and 19.) The Jews are told in effect: 'How dare you ask for the miracle of the consuming fire when in the past you have not even refrained from murdering Prophets who performed that miracle?'

فَاِ ن كَذَّبُ كَ فَقَ كُذِّبَ رُسُلٌ مِّ ن قَ لِکَ جَآءُ بِا لبَيِّنٰتِ وَ الزُّبُرِ وَ ا لكِتٰبِ ا لمُنِيرِ
١٨٤

(3-184) Now, if they give the lie to you, then other Messengers who came bearing clear signs and scriptures and the illuminating Book were also given the lie before you.

كُلُّ نَفسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ا لمَ وتِ ۭ وَ اِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْ نَ اُجُو رَكُمْ يَوْ مَ لقِيٰمَةِ ۭ فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَ اُ دْخِلَ لجَنَّةَ فَقَ فَازَ ۭ وَ مَا لحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَ اِلَّا مَتَاعُ ا لغُرُورِ ١٨٥

(3-185) Everyone is bound to taste death and you shall receive your full reward on the Day of Resurrection. Then, whoever is spared the Fire and is admitted to Paradise has indeed been successful. The life of this world is merely an illusory enjoyment. (130)

(130) Whoever considers the effects of his actions in this earthly life to be of crucial significance, and sees in them the criteria of right and wrong, the criteria of that which leads either to one's ultimate salvation or to one's doom, falls prey to a serious misconception. The fact that a person is outstandingly successful in life does not necessarily prove that he is either not prove that he has either strayed from the right way or is out of favor with God. The earthly results of a man's actions are often quite different from the ones he will see in the Next Life. What is of true importance is what will happen in that eternal life rather than in this transient one.

لَتُبْ لَوُنَّ فِي مْ وَالِكُمْ وَ اَنْفُسِكُم وَ لَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِ نَ اُ تُوا ا لكِتٰبَ مِ قَ لِكُمْ وَ مِنَ الَّذِ يْنَ اَ شْرَكُوْ ا اَذًى كَثِ رًا ۭ وَ اِ نْ تَصْبِرُ ا وَ تَتَّقُوْ ا فَاِنَّ ذٰلِکَ مِ نْ عَزْمِ لْاُمُورِ ١٨٦

(3-186) (Believers!) You will certainly be put to test in respect of your properties and lives, and you will certainly hear many hurtful things from those who were granted the Book before you and those who have associated others with Allah in His

divinity. If you remain patient and God-fearing (131) this indeed is a matter of great resolution.

(131) Muslims should not lose their self-control in the face of the Jews' invidious taunts and slander. The Jews' accusations, debased talk and false propaganda should not provoke the Muslims into adopting a posture either inconsistent with truth and justice or with the dignity, decorum and high standards of moral conduct that become men of faith.

وَ اِذۡ اَخَذَ اللّٰہُ مِیۡثَاقَ الَّذِیۡنَ اُوۡتُوا الۡکِتٰبَ لَتُبَیِّنُنَّہٗ لِلنَّاسِ وَ لَا تَکۡتُمُوۡنَہٗ فَنَبَذُوۡہُ وَرَآءَ ظُہُوۡرِہِمۡ وَ اشۡتَرَوۡا بِہٖ ثَمَنًا قَلِیۡلًا ؕ فَبِئۡسَ مَا یَشۡتَرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۸۷﴾

(3-187) And recall when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Book: 'You shall explain it to men and not hide it. (132) Then they cast the Book behind their backs, and sold it away for a trivial gain. Evil indeed is their bargain.

(132) Although the Jews remembered that some Prophets had been endowed with the miracle of consuming fire, they conveniently forgot their covenant with God at the time they were entrusted with the Scripture, and their mission as the bearers of the Scripture. The 'covenant' to which this verse alludes is mentioned at several places in the Bible. In the last sermon of Moses, cited in Deuteronomy, he again and again calls the attention of Israel to the covenant in the following words: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And these words which I command shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.' (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9.)

لَا تَحۡسَبَنَّ الَّذِيۡنَ يَفۡرَحُوۡنَ بِمَاۤ اَتَوۡا وَّيُحِبُّوۡنَ اَنۡ يُّحۡمَدُوۡا بِمَا لَمۡ يَفۡعَلُوۡا فَلَا تَحۡسَبَنَّهُمۡ
بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ الۡعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۱۸۸﴾

(3-188) Do not think that those who exult in their misdeeds and love to be praised for what indeed they have not done, (133) do not think that they are secure from chastisement. A painful chastisement awaits them.

(133) Such people expected praises to be lavished upon them for being God-fearing, devout and pious, for being sincere servants of the true faith, for being defenders of God's Law and for having reformed and purified the lives of people, even though none of this might be true. They wanted people to go about trumpeting that such and such a person had made great sacrifices in the cause of God and had sincerely guided people to the right way even though the facts might be the reverse of what they claimed.

وَلِلّٰهِ مُلۡكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالۡاَرۡضِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ﴿۱۸۹﴾

(3-189) To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; and Allah is All-Powerful. indeed been successful.

اِنَّ فِىۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالۡاَرۡضِ وَاخۡتِلَافِ الَّيۡلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّاُولِى الۡاَلۡبَابِ ﴿۱۹۰﴾

(3-190) Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, (134) and in the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men of understanding.

(134) This section constitutes the conclusion of the present surah. It is related not so much to the verses which immediately precede it as to the entire surah. In order to grasp its significance one should particularly bear in mind our introductory remarks to this surah. (See pp. 229 ff. above.)

الَّذِيۡنَ يَذۡكُرُوۡنَ اللّٰهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوۡدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوۡبِهِمۡ وَيَتَفَكَّرُوۡنَ فِىۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ
الۡاَرۡضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقۡتَ هٰذَا بَاطِلًا سُبۡحٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ١٩١

(3-191) those who remember Allah while standing, sitting or (reclining) on their backs, and reflect in the creation of the heavens and the earth, (135) (saying): 'Our Lord! You have not created this in vain. Glory to You! Save us, then, from the chastisement of the Fire. (136)

(135) This means that with the help of those signs one can easily arrive at the Truth, provided one is not indifferent to God and looks at the phenomenon of the universe thoughtfully.

(136) When people look carefully at the order of the universe, it becomes clear to them that it is an order permeated by wisdom and intelligent purpose. It is altogether inconsistent with wisdom that the man endowed with moral consciousness and freedom of choice, the man gifted with reason and discretion, should not be held answerable for his deeds. This kind of reflection leads people to develop a strong conviction that the After-life is a reality. Thanks to this conviction, they begin to seek God's refuge from His punishment.

رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّكَ مَنۡ تُدۡخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدۡ اَخۡزَيۡتَهٗ ؕ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيۡنَ مِنۡ اَنۡصَارٍ ١٩٢

(3-192) Our Lord! Whomever You cause to enter the Fire, him You indeed bring to disgrace, and there will be none to succor the wrong-doers.

رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّنَا سَمِعۡنَا مُنَادِيًا يُّنَادِىۡ لِلۡاِيۡمَانِ اَنۡ اٰمِنُوۡا بِرَبِّكُمۡ فَاٰمَنَّا ۟ رَبَّنَا فَاغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوۡبَنَا وَ
كَفِّرۡ عَنَّا سَيِّاٰتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الۡاَبۡرَارِ ١٩٣

(3-193) Our Lord! Indeed we heard a crier calling to the faith saying: "Believe in your Lord"; so we did believe. (137) Our Lord, forgive us our sins, and wipe out our evil deeds and make us die with the truly pious.'

(137) Many eras have passed before you. Go about, then, in the land and behold the end of those who gave the lie to (the directives and ordinances of Allah).

رَبَّنَا وَ اٰتِنَا مَا وَعَدۡتَّنَا عَلٰی رُسُلِکَ وَ لَا تُخۡزِنَا یَوۡمَ الۡقِیٰمَۃِ ؕ اِنَّکَ لَا تُخۡلِفُ الۡمِیۡعَادَ ﴿۱۹۴﴾

(3-194) 'Our Lord, fulfil what You promised to us through Your Messengers, and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection; indeed You never go back on Your promise. (138)

(138) Such people do not doubt the fact that God will fulfil His promises. What they do doubt is whether they will be reckoned among those for whom those promises were made. Hence they pray to God to make them worthy of His promised rewards. They are afraid lest they remain targets of slander and ridicule by the unbelievers in this world, and then be disgraced in the Hereafter before the same unbelievers who may mock them once again saying that their faith has been of no avail to them.

فَاسۡتَجَابَ لَہُمۡ رَبُّہُمۡ اَنِّیۡ لَاۤ اُضِیۡعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنۡکُمۡ مِّنۡ ذَکَرٍ اَوۡ اُنۡثٰی ۚ بَعۡضُکُمۡ مِّنۡۢ بَعۡضٍ ۚ فَالَّذِیۡنَ ہَاجَرُوۡا وَ اُخۡرِجُوۡا مِنۡ دِیَارِہِمۡ وَ اُوۡذُوۡا فِیۡ سَبِیۡلِیۡ وَ قٰتَلُوۡا وَ قُتِلُوۡا لَاُکَفِّرَنَّ عَنۡہُمۡ سَیِّاٰتِہِمۡ وَ لَاُدۡخِلَنَّہُمۡ جَنّٰتٍ تَجۡرِیۡ مِنۡ تَحۡتِہَا الۡاَنۡہٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰہِ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ عِنۡدَہٗ حُسۡنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿۱۹۵﴾

(3-195) Their Lord answered the Prayer thus: "I will not suffer the work of any of you, whether male or female, to go to waste; each of you is from the other. (139) Those who emigrated and were driven out from their homesteads and were persecuted in My cause, and who fought and were slain, indeed I shall wipe out their evil deeds from them and shall certainly admit them to the gardens beneath which rivers flow." This is their reward with their Lord; and with Allah lies the best reward. (140)

(139) All humans are equal in the sight of God. God does not have separate criteria for judging the male and the female, the master and the slave, the high and the low.

(140) It is reported that some non-Muslims came to the Prophet and said that Moses had produced his staff and had been endowed with the miracle of the shining hand see(Quran 7: 108; 20: 22), and that Jesus restored sight to the blind and cured the lepers see (Quran 31 49). Other Prophets had also been granted miracles. What miracles, they enquired, could the Prophet perform? In response the Prophet recited all the verses from (Verse 190)to the end of this surah, adding that that was what he had brought.

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فِى الْبِلَادِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

(3-196) (O Messenger!) Do not let the strutting about of the unbelievers in the land deceive you.

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيْلٌ ثُمَّ مَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿١٩٧﴾

(3-197) This is but a little enjoyment, then their destination is Hell -what an evil resting place!

لٰكِنِ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلْاَبْرَارِ ﴿١٩٨﴾

(3-198) But those who fear their Lord: theirs shall be the gardens beneath which rivers flow and in which they will live forever: a hospitality from Allah Himself, And Allah's reward is best for the truly pious.

وَاِنَّ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِمْ خٰشِعِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ ۙ لَا يَشْتَرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ لَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩٩﴾

(3-199) And among the People of the Book some believe in Allah and what has been revealed to you, and what has been revealed to them. They humble themselves before Allah,

and do not sell Allah's revelations for a small price. For these men their reward is with their Lord. Allah is swift in His reckoning.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوا اصۡبِرُوۡا وَ صَابِرُوۡا وَ رَابِطُوۡا وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُوۡنَ ۲۰۰

(3-200) Believers, be steadfast, and vie in steadfastness, [141] stand firm in your faith, and hold Allah in fear that you may attain true success.

(141) The original Arabic word is " sabiru". This has two possible meanings. One is that whenever they are in confrontation with unbelievers, the believers should endure even greater hardships for their cause, and display a higher degree of fortitude than the unbelievers. The other is that the believers should try to excel one another in facing the opposition and hostility of unbelievers with courage and fortitude.